7ball

between rap and a hard place

POD. BREAKS THROUGH



modern music on cue

AUDIO ADRENALINE gets the upper hand

festivus maximus CROSS MOVE/ME/NT

sevenball magazine



vvaterdeep

fono

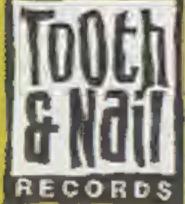
left out



STARFLYER 59 EVERYBODY MAKES MISTAKES

1. Play The C Chord (d-sharp) 2. No New Kinda Story (c-sharp) 3. 20 Dollar Bills (c-sharp) 4. No More Shows (b-flat) 5. Just Try (c-sharp) 6. My Name (b) 7. A Dethroned King (d-sharp) 8. Going Places (b) 9. The Party (f-sharp)

OUT NOVEMBER 1999



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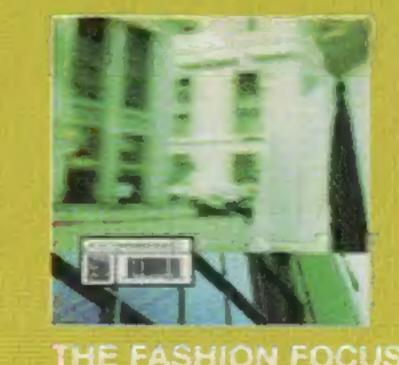


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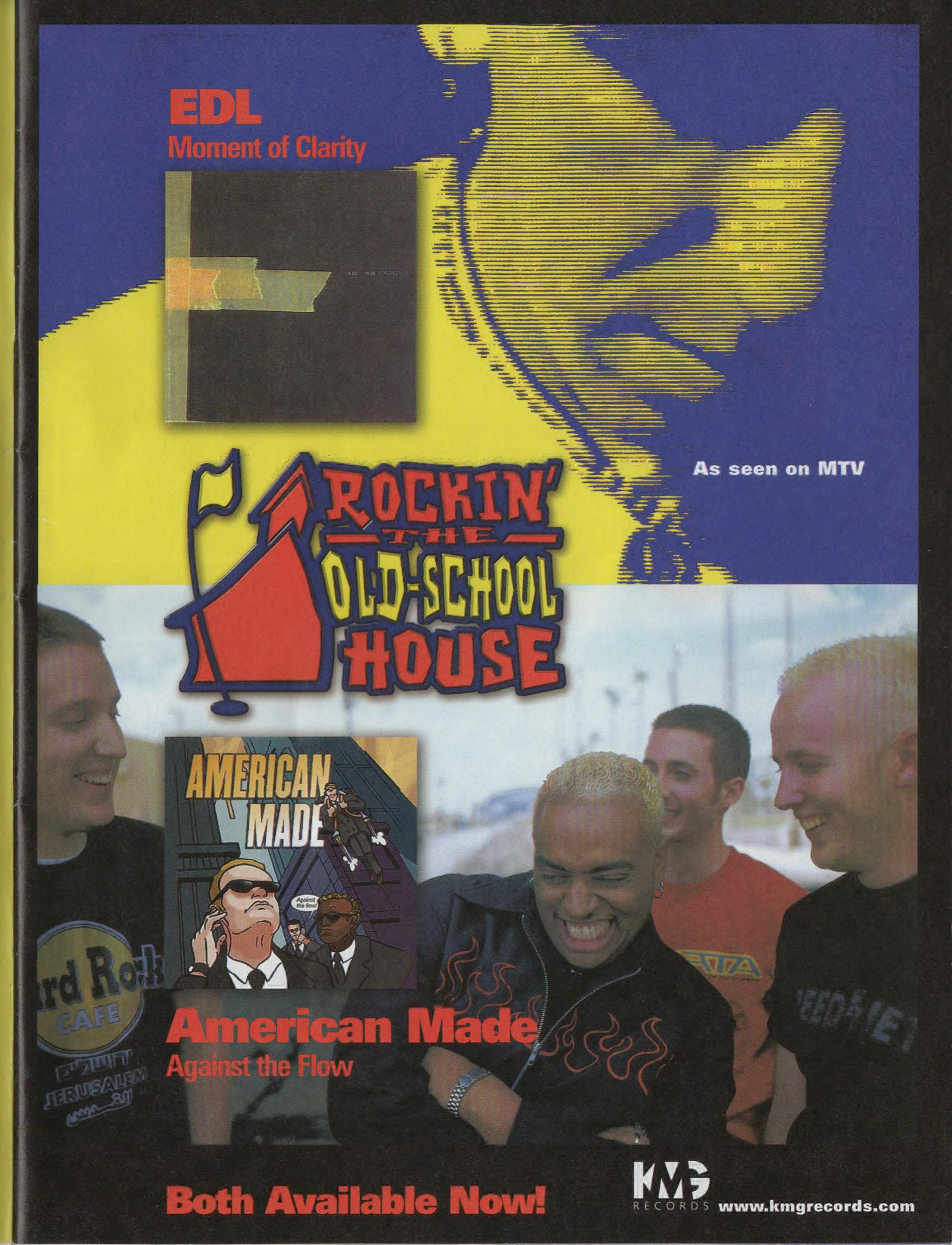






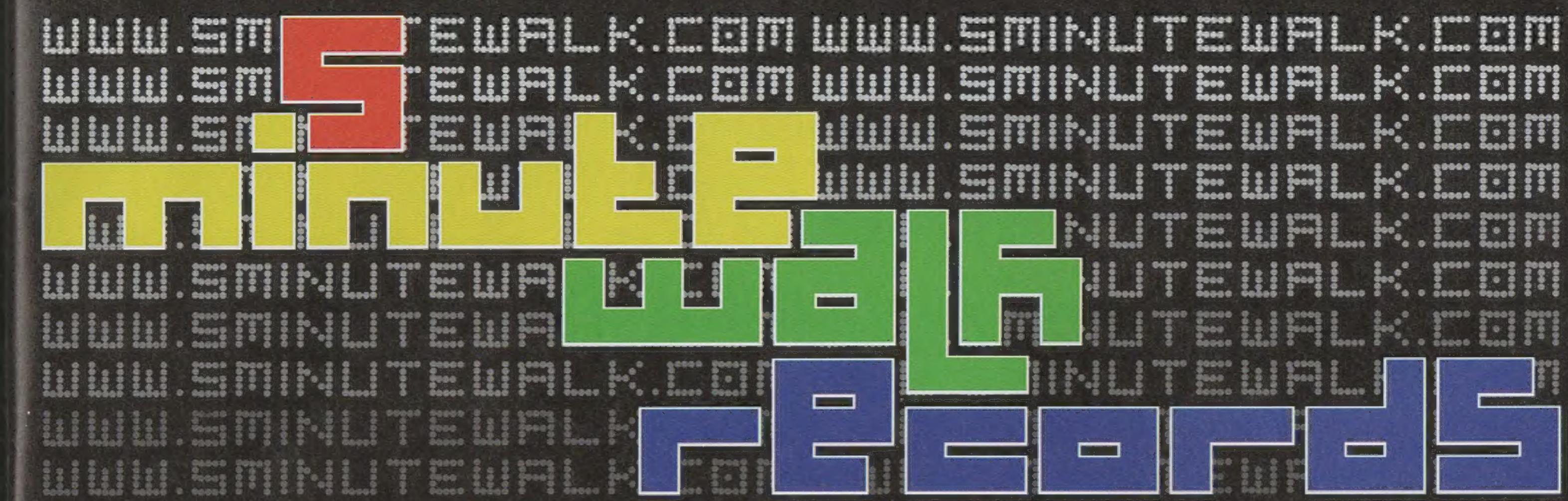






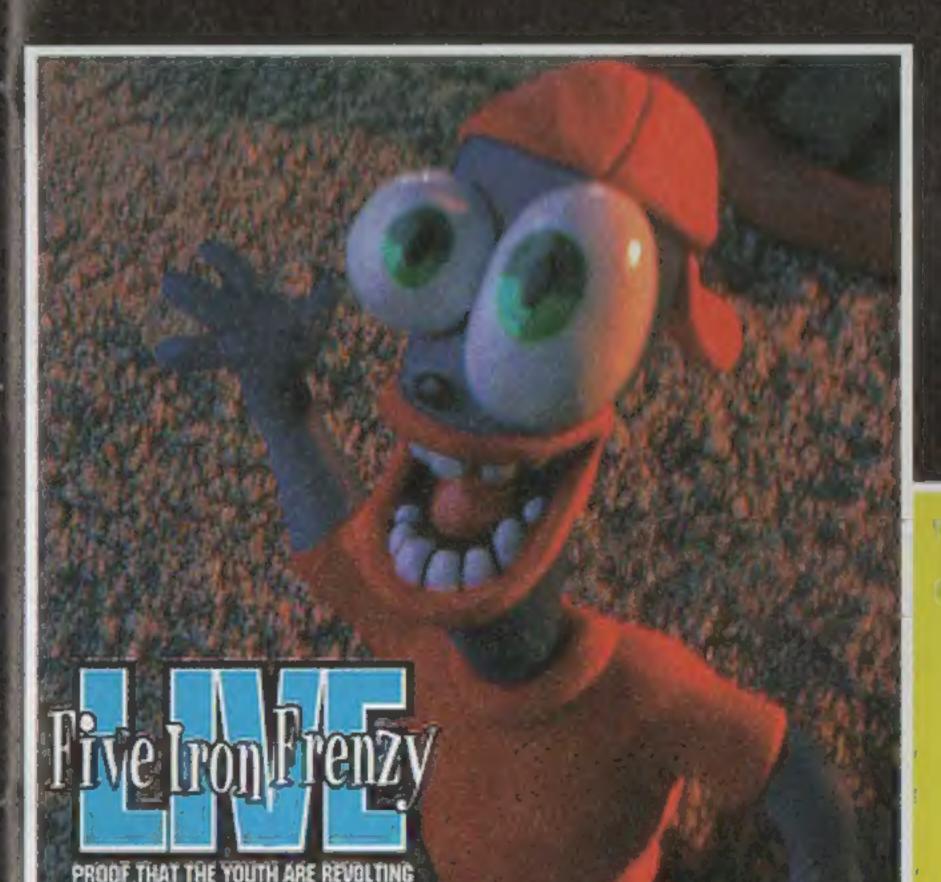


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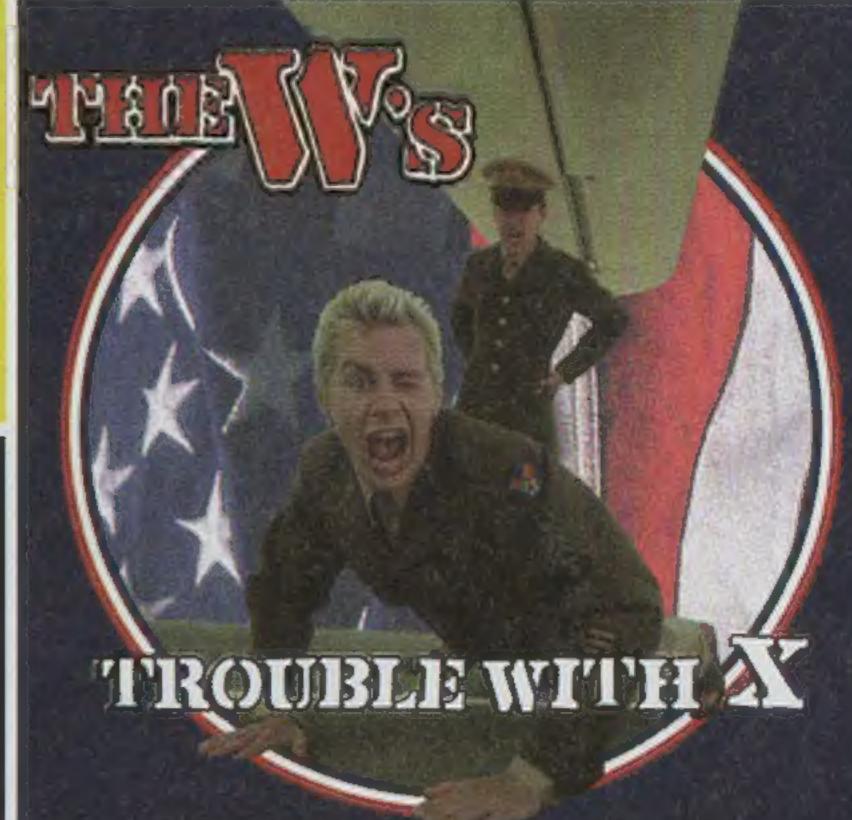
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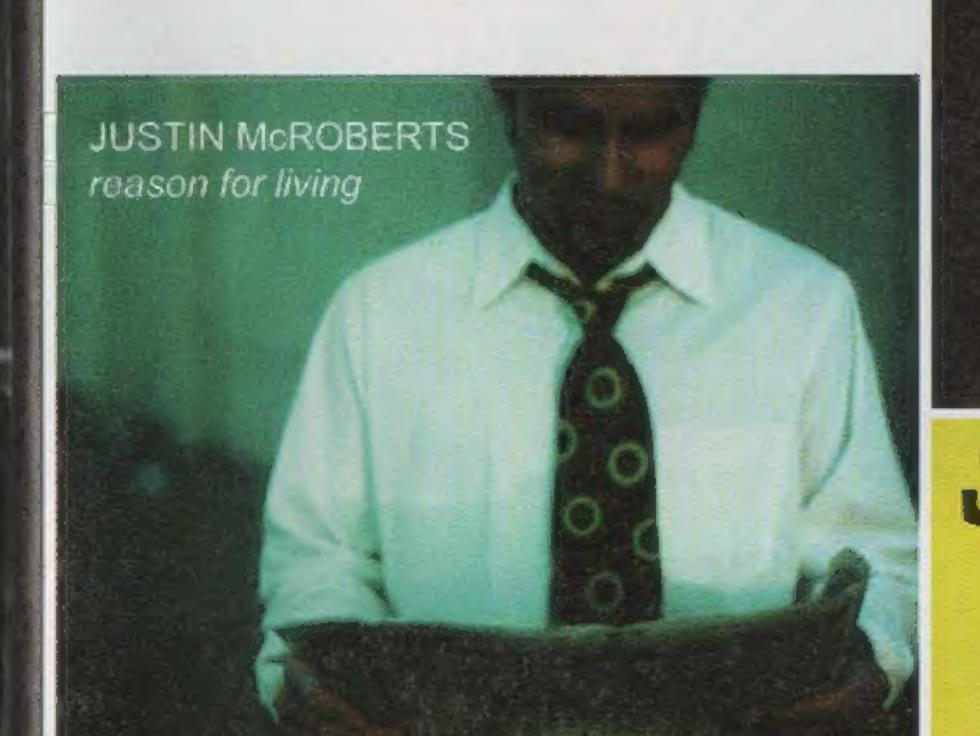
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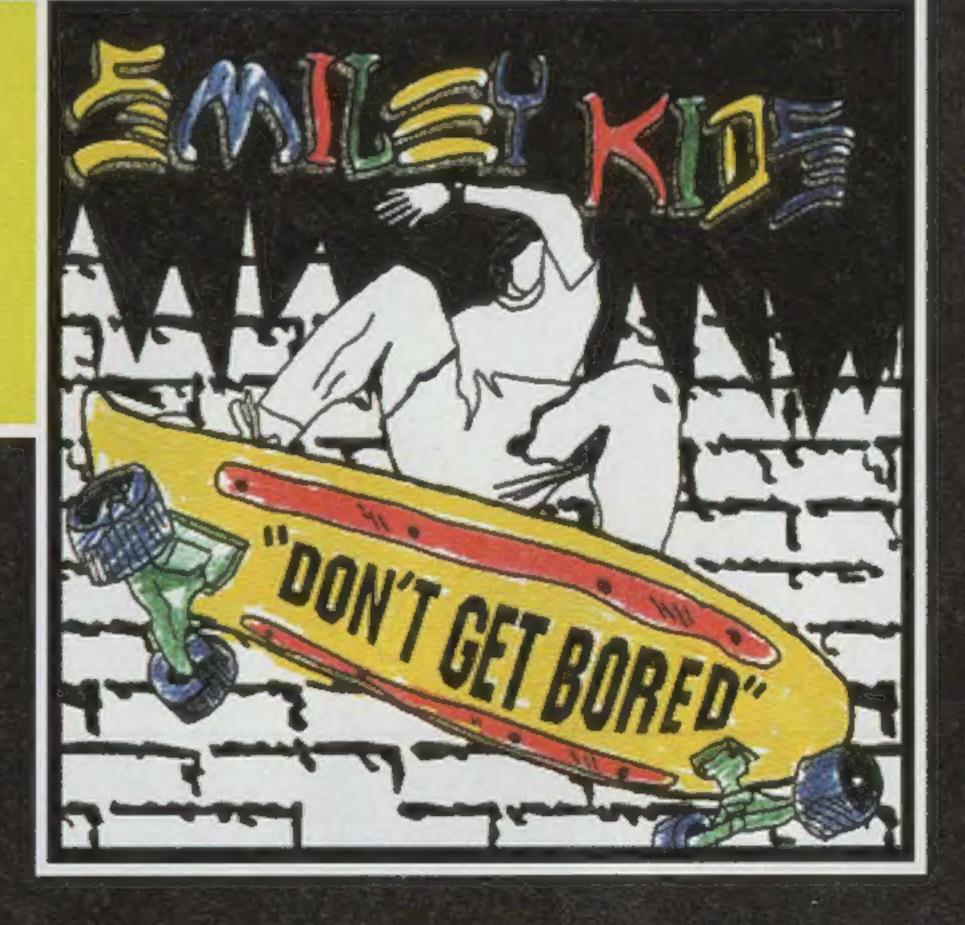
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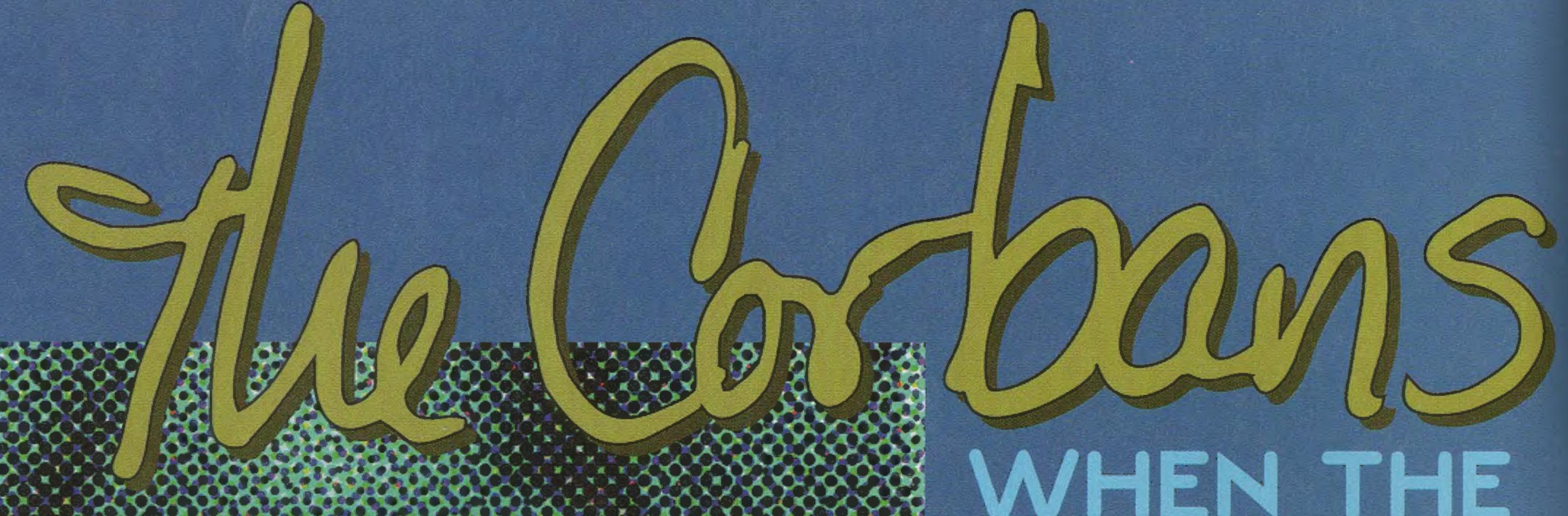
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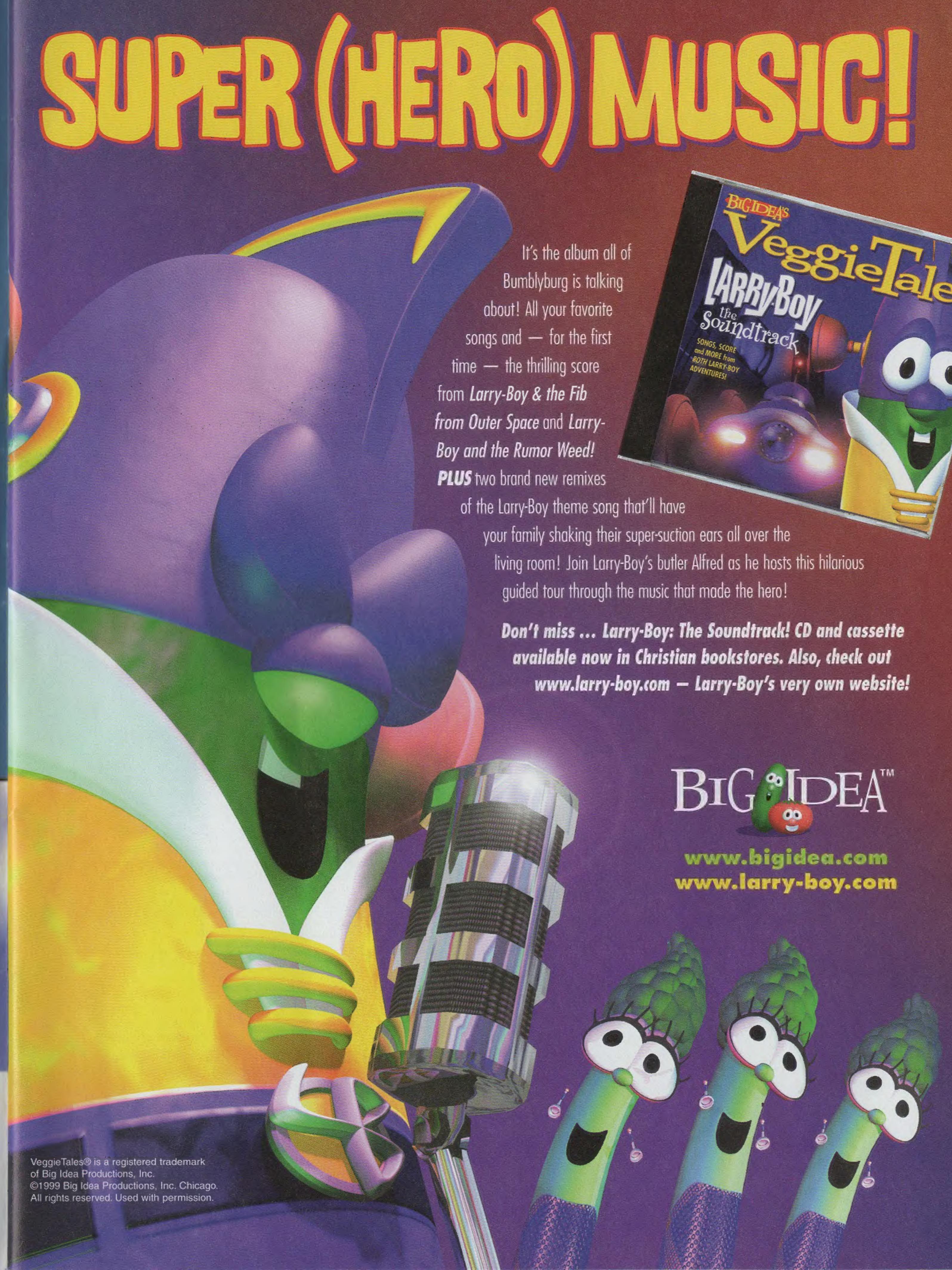


WARNING: This work contains high concentrations of the truth. Listening at extreme volume levels or for extended periods of time can cause damage to the kingdom of darkness.





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DEPARTMENTS FEATURES BANKSHOTS

FEATURES

Features are where we'd like to cover really, really

big name Christian artists. But we usually have to

settle for artists who are cool, who you've heard

America's favorite moistened towelette (sorry,

Moistnap®). This month's selections include:

of, who don't owe us money and are not

P.O.D.

ER A. P. F. ER A. P. F. BEEF L. P.

angry wasps. When they say, "We'll try," 5,000 wasps. ("We can," one wasp.)

34 Fono 36 Urban Disciple/Left Out

The best part of *7ball* is the CD that comes with it. This page is actually liner notes for the CD that comes with the mag. So, technically, if you want to know what in the world it is you're listening to, you at least have to glance at this. But no need to worry about long-term retention.

Since we're not allowed to put our "actual opinions" in the articles (thanks, Rules of Journalism), we brilliantly created a reviews section. It's a recent innovation of ours, and we feel it might catch on with other publications. At any rate, here we can say what we really think about albums, artists and their families.

> Our editors think they have opinions about things other than music that people would actually want to read. This is the page they've set aside for their editorial discretion. Usually, they just rant about things they view as "important," "spiritual," "relevant" and/or "funny" (Chris likes to write about comic books). We've learned this page keeps the guys happy, so we let them have it. Humoring the editors keeps peace in the office [i.e., The Rubberband/ Stapler Incident of July 1973].

ADREMALINE

Since they have a big, big house, we thought it'd be fun to go play football in their big, big yard. But all they wanted to do was sit at their big, big table and eat lots of lots of food. Then we all got kicked out because it was their father's house, and he didn't want them throwing parties.

Two turntables and a microphone—and an electric guitar, a bass, a drummer and Sonny, That's P.O.D. One day while pondering, we said to ourselves You know, maybe we should do a story on them. Then Chris said, "Who?" And Cameron said, "P.O.D." Then Chris said, "Yeah, I liked them better after they changed their name to just 'Preachas." And Cameron said, "No, that was P.I.D." And then Chris said, "Whatever happened to those guys?" Cameron said, "I don't know," and we left it at that.

CROSS

If you haven't heard about the phenomenon called Cross Movement, the following can be assumed: 1) You don't listen to hip-hop. 2) You think Thall covers way too much hip-hop. 3) You wish 7ball covered more "sensitive" music. 4) Your favorite dish is duck a l'orange. 5) You made your boyfriend watch Emma every weekend for two months, even though it ended the same way EVERY TIME. 6) And then he stood in the rain for four hours and you never showed up. 7) I want my TV back ... Hannah Taylor, I'm talking to you.

Departments are where we cover everything else that is important in music today (notice the decided absence of teenage pop artists). This month, and every month, you'll find: This is where you write to us and we print your letters—usually coupled with witty, insightful (or, perhaps, inciteful) replies. Pretty standard uff, really. What you don't realize, though, is the sheer volime of correspondence we receive each month. It's like you people think we just sit here watching cartoons with nothing better to do than read your letters and write sarcastic responses. While that MAY BE TRUE, it doesn't mean you then are obligated to flood our email In boxes with notes of critique, admiration and/or self-effacing drivel. Or all three. However, reading your emails does give us something to do other than actual "work," so hey, write soon! Write often! Modern Rock News & Progressive Airplay Chart This is where we cover modern rock. When we don't have enough modern rock to cover, we cover baked Hip-Hop/Dance News & Rhythmic Airplay Ch This is where we cover hip-hop and dance. Okay, this is whe we cover hip-hop (95%) and dance (5%). So sue us. Loud News & Loud Airplay Chart WHAT?? SPEAK UP!! ankshots are, for the most part, inspirational stories of perseverance and faith. Whenever any of these artists say can't," it makes us wish they'd get swarmed by 10,000





In stores Now Available wherever you buy great rock music



The self-titled new release from

keyword ForeFront _www.bleedcom

letters, emails and notes—oh my!

(but enough with the monkies® already)

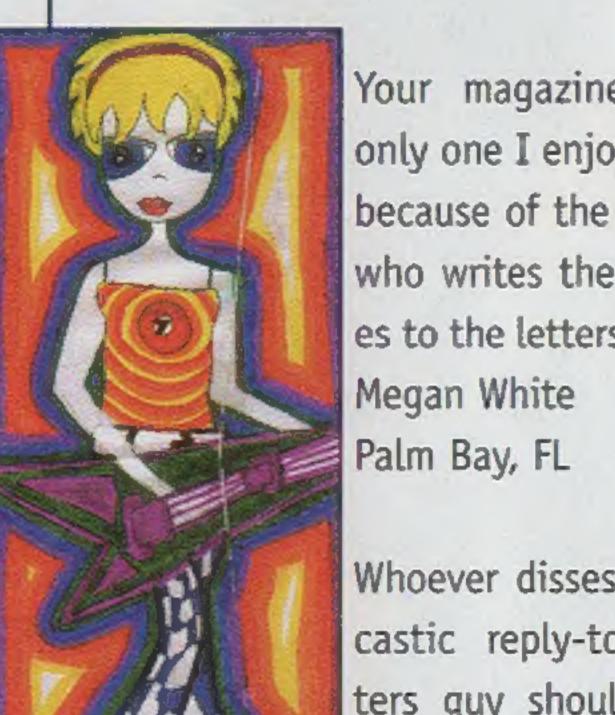
mean and sarcastic you are.

2) For putting out the only staff box I your mag). Have you ever tried to read T-Bone is wearing on page 45 in issue actually want to read. Somehow jokes a piece of cheese? Or put cheese in a 25? make their way onto that page, too.

is male ... If so, are you single? 'Cause next issue of 7ball. I think I'd marry you. What more can Crystal Hicks you ask for? I mean, a God-loving Mansfield, OH Christian man with a great sense of humor is relatively hard to find. Lisa Harshberger

We are now taking applications. Email I normally listen to yours to wifeapplication@7ball.com more conservative or write 7ball Editor Wife Application, Christian music, but 3670 Central Pike, Suite J, Hermitage, thanks for showing TN 37076. Only applicants with glossy me bands who aren't coats, above-average marbling, bloom afraid to be extreme and Nitrogen absorption will be for Christ. considered.

Cicero, NY



Your magazine is the who writes the respons- your mag when I'm walking to work Mason Murchison es to the letters you get. and I always bump into signs. So if you via the Internet

Whoever disses the sar- via the Internet castic reply-to-the-letters guy shouldn't diss It's unanimous: We like the cut of your the sarcastic reply-to- jib.

cool. Leave him alone. I would do any- I am writing in regard to issue No. 24. have you posted the correct web funny, but it's really not working. You thing to have his job. I think I'm I was shocked that nowhere in your address? The one you gave doesn't need someone who's really sarcastic ... gonna start "The Official Sarcastic news article did you state homosexual- exist. Reply to the Letters Guy from 7ball ity is a sin ["Loud News," page 16]. Andy Crowley Magazine Fan Club Webpage"! Mike "Punk Rawk Star" Kresnik via the Internet

or write 7ball Editor Wife Application, Rachel Holzaepfel 3670 Central Pike, Suite J, Hermitage, via the Internet TN 37076. Only applicants with glossy considered.

I want to comment on three things: Once I get your mag, I read it cover to that. Will people just keep their ty spiffy already but it it's mostly because of the responses. depression stage and eat a lot of wrong with ska? Ska rocks. Realizing not everyone has my sense of cheese. Then I go through withdrawal Josh McKenna humor, it's great to read the responses ... and I eat a lot of cheese. Then I go via the Internet when they are commenting on how postal and overdose on cheese (which, I might add, is a poor substitute for What is the significance of the shirt ered your magazine in CD player? Doesn't work, I tell ya. I've Steve Olson 3) Three has nothing to do with the used cheese to keep my mind off the via the Internet magazine. I'm assuming that the per- fact that I have to go through a whole son who writes the responses to letters month and three weeks until I get the We went right to the source and found God, love others, love SPAM.

with our compliments.

Jen Spiker

Jessup, MD

appreciated.

Jake Bligner

could do that, it would be greatly

11 that people who practice such

1) The letters to the editor are proba- cover three times by the end of the mouths shut? If you don't like the mag, would be better if it bly my favorite things to read. OK, so first week. Then, I go through a don't buy it. And what is so stinkin' were longer.

1) it covered his torso; 2) the Ashley Weatherford cotton/poly blend was lightweight, yet Quitman, TX durable; 3) it was black.

Arriving alongside your next 7ball will It's amazing how many letters you run more fudge. More sarcasm. More

be a block of Gouda— OVE (1999) every issue. I didn't annoying stuff that is incredibly hilar-

many readers. via the Internet

What can a band do to get on one of [issue 25] and saw the pictures. I came the Gas CDs under "Somebody Sign up with a new name for the band and These Guys"? The name of my band is CD: Shaded Black, Goth Revolution. Kamikaze Friday. We are friends with What is with this trend of Christian only one I enjoy reading Can you make a mag with a clear win- and from the same school/area as Filet artists dressing black head to toe? I because of the rude guy dow in it? You see, I enjoy reading of Soul. We are a 7-piece ska band. see it at concerts as well as in publici-

Send a high-quality CD or DAT recording Disgruntled Reader to Gas Collection, 3670 Central Pike, Cincinnati, OH Suite J, Hermitage, TN 37076. What we do with it is up to us. [maniacal laugh] Yes, Shaded Red, Newsboys, dc Talk—all

You piqued my interest in the band Fleau ["The Indie 25," July/Aug], but Your sarcasm stinks. You guys try to be

God clearly says in 1 Corinthians 6:9- via the Internet

things are wicked. Now, I agree that We found out why the site doesn't work Jacob A. Blakeney we should love the person, but not the anymore: The band broke up. See what via the Internet We are now taking applications. Email sin. Doug Pinnick is struggling with a happens to all the good indie bands? yours to wifeapplication@7ball.com sin and should be prayed for. They break up. To enjoy our humor, you must be at

The bands you review are awesome. Sometimes I tear out pages on bands I Simply put, the layout for issue 26 was coats, above-average marbling, bloom 7ball is cool, but I get sick and tired of like and stick them on my school note- sorely wanting. 7ball would do well to and Nitrogen absorption will be reading people downgrading the mag. books. I think you should add some It's always I don't like this, I don't like more cool stuff to your mag. It's pret-

Jenny Miller via the Internet

I just recently discovlocal Christian the bookstore and it

great. I love the diversity in styles of music. Could you do a story on Between Thieves and Stavesacre? Love

Go for it. More tortillas, more brownies, know you had that ious. More stupidity.

Jon Kreher via the Internet

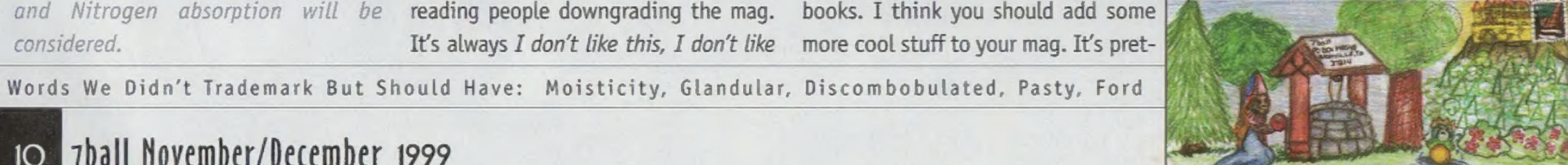
Shakespeare said it best: Thou tottering We have that many base-court apple john.

> I read your article on Shaded Red ty photos. Newsboys, Delirious, do Talk, Plumb, they all do it. It just looks very dark and evil.

goth, all the time.

like me. If you want to make stupid comments that don't relate to the subject matter of the incoming letters, I'm your man.

least this tall.



scrap the whole "pseudo-cutting edge" you included 300 slices of American right here, and we just happen to

Head, pictures of fudge, "thumbs If you ask me, that's probably how we all agree, but one solitary wish up/thumbs down" in the reviews). I they make cherry cough syrup. realize that the whole "point" of their Daniel Walin inclusion is for absurdity's sake, but it via the Internet is wrecking your credibility.

J. Edward Keyes via the Internet

To all the crotchety people who hate via the Internet reading 7ball but read it anyway and



then write and complain about how CD thing, it really kicks. stupid it is: If God has a sense of Zak Swain humor, and God is perfect, AND 7ball Rochester, MN editors were also made in God's image, wouldn't it make sense for the 7ball Try the 7ball Gas Collection—and new www.fabdoggrecords.com people to have a sense of humor, too? 7ball Gas Collection Homestyle! Sarah Holmes

via the Internet

forgotten the words of James __ 4:12? I think we should praise God for 7ball and its message. What better way to introduce our unsaved friends to Christian music?

Mike Whisman Waverly, WV

In "Cameron's Shopping List" on the *7ball* website [www.7ball.com], I noticed

look and resort to a simple text with cheese! I am a big fan of cheese, espe- amass the Super 7ball Star Fleet. pictures layout (see Time, US News & cially the individually wrapped (That's just an ostentatious name for a World Report, Entertainment Weekly). American kind. Did you know when you fan club. All rights reserved.) Just this Also, I'm not sure why you insist on mix individually wrapped American morning we plucked 7,777 hairs from cluttering the magazine with non- cheese with Pepsi, you get the exact our dear feline Chester's back into the sequiturs (The Big Wooden Indian taste of cherry cough syrup? It's true! shape of a seven. It's a masterpiece,

I'm trying to find an email address for - its blizzard-like splendor? Then we Switchfoot. Billy McDonald

You can email Switchfoot through their

soon. Write often.

about 7ball. It's fine if you've got a hunger for new music profiles. But one that. problem with something but there's no in particular I loved was on Disciple's Jamey Bennett need to complain just because it does- new release This Might Sting A Little via the Internet n't meet your personal interests. It [issue 25]. One word about the album: could be the very thing you don't like incredible. I can actually feel myself Yes, but were you blessed a million? that leads an unbeliever to a saving worshiping to the lyrics. The guys' licks

we just hap-

remains in the innermost caverns of our souls. Could you please FedEx a fleece cape for Chester to wear when the bitter Kansas winter arrives in all could place it in our freezer right next ly like to see more underground bands to the ping-pong balls.

via the Internet

website, www.switchfoot.com. Write Caffeine: not always a good thing.

I'm a newbie on this mag and I love it. want to thank you for the blurb about guy anyway? I have about three issues. Oh yeah, the us in issue 25. So far we've had over Jacob Kern 5,000 hits on our site since the issue via the Internet came out! Thanks a million.

Tobias Moran via the Internet

I'm from Royal Ruckus Productions, I do have a question: In I have been reading your bimonthly for and I want to thank you for allowing issue 25 your little letter more than two years now and antici- us to be a part of your article on the reply guy—who is quite Lately I've noticed a lot of griping pate each new mag with a growing Indie 25. We were blessed big time by funny, I might add—

knowledge of Jesus Christ. Have we get my head bobbin, and it just does- Your mag is phat! I been wit' you the do a phat article on Dear Ephesus. n't stop. I am last two years, and I has gots to say They are just the most super fantastic already hungry that you know where it's at! I love band in the world. for another your articles and how you keep us Joel Chandler fresh on all the latest in the industry. via the Internet Kevin Carroll I gotta say it's about time you guys are the giving Christian rap/hip-hop respect, We really dig Dear Ephesus, too. That's 'cause God knows these guys have why we weren't happy when we received come a long way! Hello, are you Brian Simmer in there? Well, via the Internet

pen to be I have a couple questions: 1) I'd real- two ago, and I've loved it ever since.

like Philmore, God's Bus and others. Robyn and the Super *7ball* Star Fleet Most of them are punk rock, but you'll be telling people about new bands even though they've been around a long time. 2) The best baked potato topping is absolutely nothing. 3) Try This is Tobias from FabDogg Records. I Fancy Feast on your cat. 4) Who is that

> 1) Not a question. 2) Not a question. 3) Not a question. 4) Cook, the gardener.

answers one of the letters If someone is weird and/or carrying tortillas, do not greet them with 'Nice to see you'.

They may be bilingual. What's up with that? It's pretty dern funny. You should

word they have officially broken up.

You guys have the most awesome mag. My friend showed it to me a year or

1322 South Quincy Avenue Tulsa, OK 74120 rings, GA 30127 Charleston, SE 29424 Fave Bands: Violet Favorite Bands: Waterdeep, Fave Bands: Third Day, The W's, Jennifer Knapp Fave Bands: The Waiting, Burning, Plankeye, Sixpence None The Richer. Shaded Red. At Green

929 North 4th Street 2943 121st Burlington, LA 52501 Toledo, OH 43611 Fave Bands: Plankeye, Shaded Fave Bands: Five Iron Frenzy, Red, Rose Blossom Punch Plankeye, Ghoti Hook

12207 Cardston Court Tomball TX 77375 Fave Bands: MxPx, One-21, Pocket Change

Chris Miyata

2663 Sun Valley Street Jenison, MI 49428 Fave Bands: MxPx, Five

Scott, LA 70583 Fave Bands: Supertones, Iron Frenzy, The Dingees Grammatrain, Blackball

1440 North Highway 93 2283 Northwest 1st Avenue Fave Bands: Roadside Monument, Pedro the Lion, Insyderz

Rhine, P.O.D., LoBo, Juliana Theory Mathan Isaacs

Upland, IN 46989-1001 Fave Bands: Delirious, Sixpence None The Richer, Fave Bands: Over

Chris Plummer

Rhine, Jars of Cl Jennifer Knapp Mark Bitner, Jr.

Male, 14 Male, 16 Route 2, 8ox 1417 Fave Bands: Officer

110 Lafayette Road Audubon, NJ 80106-11 Fave Bands: Blaster the Negative, Squad 5-0, MxPx Rocketboy, One-21, Phil Keaggy

Upland, IN 46989-1001

To be included in "Pen Pals," mail your info to 3670 Central Pike, Suite J, Hermitage, TN 37076. If you're under 18, you must include a signature of a parent or legal guardian. If you're 18 or older, you can also email your listing to 7ball@7ball.com.

7ball November/December 1999

Reasons We Didn't Run All the Letters We Got About Monkies®

•Those PETA threats. (Mmm... pitas...) ·We're saving them for our special supplement "Monkies"! Monkies"! Monkies"!" For more info, email monkiesissue@7ball.com. •You can only rhyme "banana" 17 times before it gets old.

•It's not the Monkies®, it's the humidity. •We don't speak Canadian.

Anyway, could you do an article on Sundry? I met the band six months ago and they were really cool! Could you also do an article on Pocket Change? Seth Synstelien

Powder Springs, GA

Hey, cool mag. I wish so many people to their heads and forced them to read Adam Smith 7ball. (Did they?) I enjoy the music on via the Internet the CD, but I wish you would do some

Ephesus, Forever Tree and a cool new band from T&N called Short Handed. And thanks for the Pen Pal section. I met a cool girl from Wichita. Jake Souders via the Internet

Yes, 7ball is just a cover for a massive underground dating service.

Your mag rocks. It's cool to see a Dave Detwiler Christian music mag that rivals Rolling Schnecksville, PA Stone and the like without the 1-900 thing since burritos were microwav- today! able! Also, the discs are rad, especially the Indie edition-those bands are Your wit has not gone unnoticed. I got gravy boat" in one of your responses. Terry denBok

Vernon, BC, Canada

Your mag is good. What can I say? I dig Shana "Bubba" Smith? Or it. If you ever turn it into a magazine Kyle "I'm not drowning!" about raising albino camels, though, Chowning? Oh, slipping in tell me so I can cancel my subscription. the "Batman - Bruce Unless you send me a free albino Wayne" reference was camel, in which case I'll keep subscrib- classic. Thank you for ing, but only if I can name it Blackie. being so classic. Speaking of which, I love the "Blah Steve Guiles Blah Blah" section; it is swell. Keep Southern California

shining strong. Keith Dow via the Internet

> Dude, set down the dancing gravy boat ... and just walk away.

I like the way 7ball is, so don't change it. I would really like to see an article on Buck or Officer Negative or the Dingees because they are really cool. The first 7ball I ever read was the one with MxPx on the cover. They were handing them out at Tooth & Nail Fest, and I picked one up and thought it was cool. I also think it's pretty awesome you're putting CDs in with it. Aaron Kukulka

wouldn't write in just to gripe and nit- I spent some time hanging out at your pick. I think if they don't like the mag booth at a festival. Who are the guys they shouldn't buy it. No one put a gun working your booth? They were so cool.

via the Internet

more articles on bands like Dear Cosmo Joe headed up the fest crew. The

Anyone who reads writes or emails to you needs to under-

stand they're exposing themselves to potential ridicule or kudos. It's cool to have fun, and most of your sarcastic responses needle those who have willingly entered the punishment area.

ads at the end. Where'd you get the guy Do you know someone who needs to be that answers these?! He's the greatest bitten by a dog? Order a Dogbiting®

cool. Anyway, I thought it would be a very "Simpson's closing credits" vibe cool if you used the phrase "dancing from your staff box [issue 24]. I especially liked "Bring tha Pain" Cameron Strang. How about these: Jessica

"Bustin' Rhymes Like Seven Ball Robot J.R.R. Tolkien" Folkins? Or



7BALL MAGAZINE NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999 NUMBER 27

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THUMBS DOWN THE PEOPLE NOT

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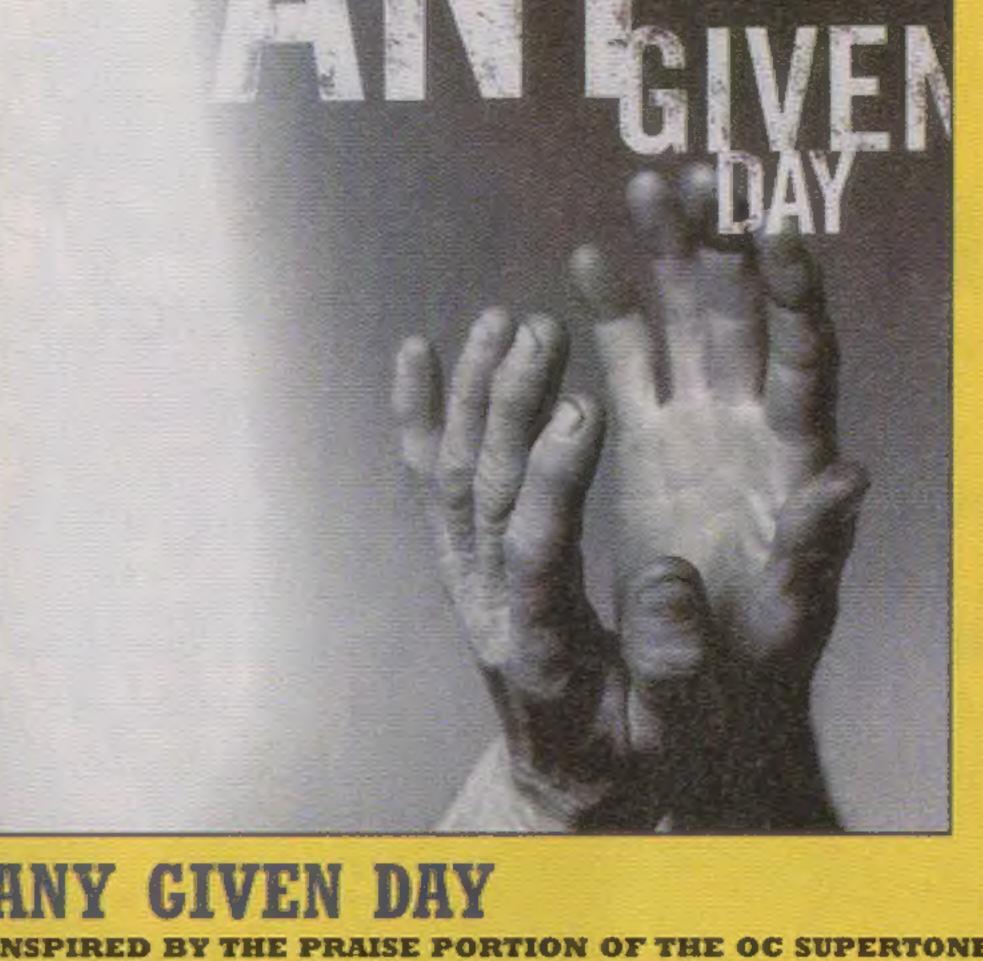
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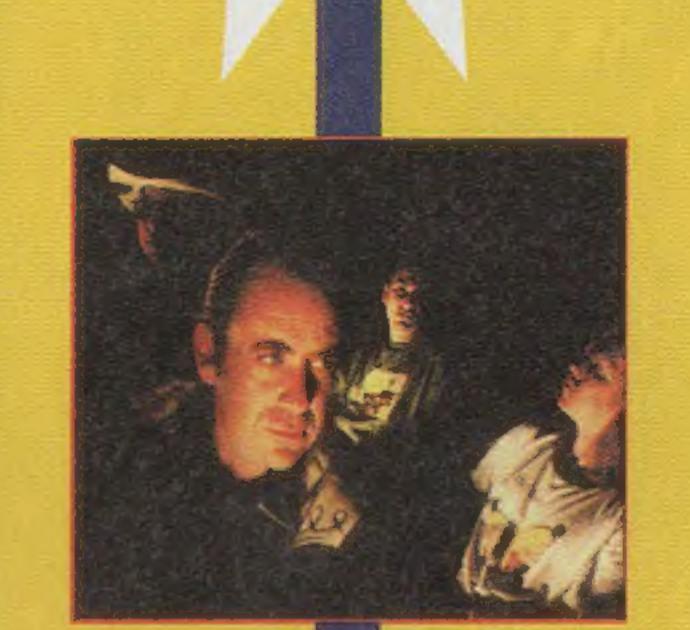
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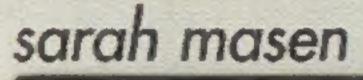
CLASSICS ONCE AGAIN BY THE LIKES OF MXPX, ALL-STAR UNITED, PLANKEYE, SIXPENCE NONE THE RICHER, STARFLYER 59, JOY ELECTRIC AND THE LOST DOGS.

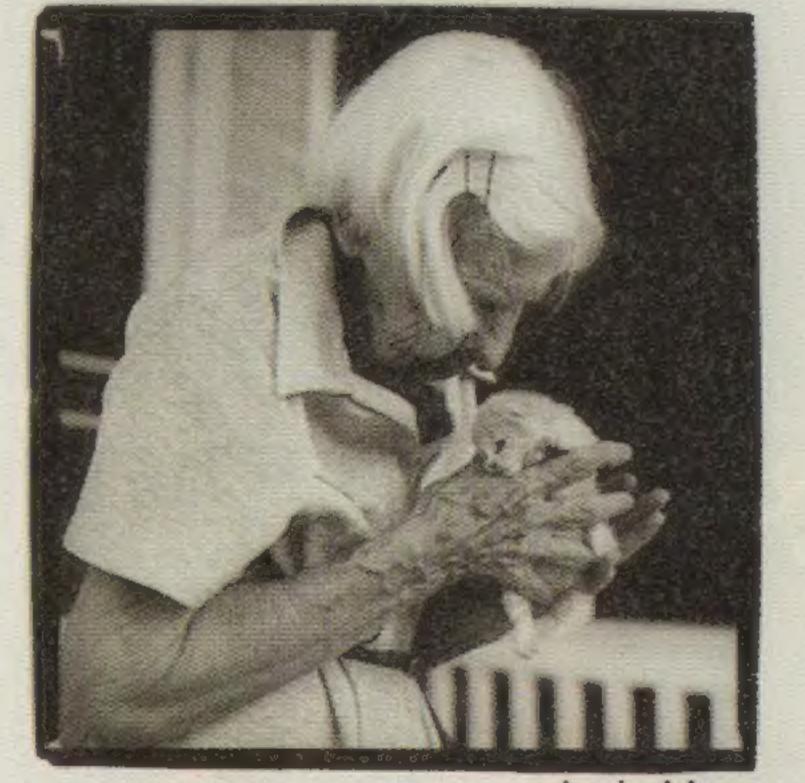
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SO NICE WE NAMED IT TWICE

national battle of the bands CD, free with the purchase of any other Rugged Big Tent Revival has a new album,

> on Leno, they cancelled everything, interactivity. including the chance to play for a worldwide broadcast of an overseas NFL The latest from Screaming Giant game. Now they're rested and back on Records: Jeremiah's Grotto, a 3-piece the beat. At press time, they were set to emo band from Gainseville, Fla., which co-headline 30 dates with Better Than draws comparisons to Sunny Day Real Ezra and Jeremy Tomack in September Estate and Dear Ephesus; and 7-10 and October, taking their new string Split, a 4-piece punk band from Atlanta, section out with them. For current tour likened to Strung Out and Slick Shoes. info, check www.spypromotions.com.

> Speaking of Sixpence, their out-ofprint cover of "You're a Mean One, Mr. Nail, BEC, Solid State) directed the Grinch" appears on Happy Christmas 2, music video for Starflyer 59's "Traffic which also includes MxPx, Lost Dogs, Jam," a 14-minute track from the EP Joy Electric, All Star United, Plankeye Fell In Love At 22. The band's next and many more.

> Due to circumstances beyond their control, The Juliana Theory has cancelled the rest of their tour. If you Wagon have reformed under the name weren't able to catch them this time Honeymooner. Steve Guiles (lead singer, around, be sure to look for them again guitarist, songwriter), Eric Shouse as they will be doing another tour soon. (bass, vocals, keyboard) and Ben

> up for a new record. Although the four folk/acoustic cover of Stryper's "Calling have been busy since the group broke On You" for Isaiah 53:5 (A Tribute to up, a recent reunion—the first time Stryper), and will be in the studio for they performed together in some two- the rest of the year/decade/century and-a-half years-got them excited recording a full-length indie release. about working together again. "Steve [Hindalong] and Derri [Daugherty] are Adult alternative band The really motivated right now and are at a Innocence Mission finally returns with creative high," says member Dan Birds Of My Neighborhood, which marks Michaels. "It's going to be Steve's clas- a major transition in the life of the sic kind of lyrics and all, but he's in a group, especially in the lives of different place right now in his life and founders and songwriters Karen and Don his family and his church. Most likely, Peris. The songs were written and it's going to come out more worshipful recorded during the last years of an instead of, as he puts it, 'twisted, bit- agonizing period of childlessness, while tersweet love songs." The album will the couple longed to start a family, and

Rugged Records is releasing a more info, check out www.thechoir.net.

album, featuring 18 unsigned artists. Choose Life, and a special website: Listeners then vote for their favorites www.chooseternalife.org. There's a on the double-disc, and the winning bonus disc attached to Choose Life band will be offered a record contract. which contains the Gospel as preached by Greg Laurie at the Harvest Crusades, Sixpence None The Richer took as well as the Big Tent single, "Choose August off-except for an appearance Life." Both discs also include CD-ROM

Both debuts should be on shelves now.

Label bigwig Brandon Ebel (Tooth & album, Everybody Makes Mistakes, is scheduled to hit shelves this month.

Three former members of Pushstart Eggehorn (drums, percussion and other The members of The Choir are gearing assorted noises) have recorded a

likely be an independent project. For then as Karen was pregnant with their

"We call it noisy, eclectic pop," keyboardist Nick Ayres says. "Kind of an oddball mix of different styles you can't really describe as anything other than Picnic." "They're pulling from old roots but doing it in such a new way that

it's very innovative," says Nashville producer Dave Browning. "It's all about having a good time, but doing it in a way that promotes thought in their Christianity and the deeper level of things."

Believable Picnic is Ayres (keyboards, programming), Jason Burkum (vocals, bass) and Jade Hanson (vocals, guitars). The group's sophomore release, Welcome To The Future, contains a few nods to the past and suggests a spectrum of musical influences.

"Music to us is fun, and we like to express that at our shows," Hanson says. "We wanted that on this album. We don't take ourselves very seriously."

There's the surf-flavored "Ride the Wave" and early-'70s-themed "Easy Chair." There are also some Beatlesque sounds, as evidenced on "Flowers." Still, the music is fresh. "I think the album is a true musical sampling of where we all are," Burkum says. "We have very different tastes and come from very different musical backgrounds; somehow we managed to pull them all together."

"But you'll notice that we've tied upbeat, happy music to serious themes," Hanson says. "There are some pointed lyrics on this album."

"If you want to know what we're like as people," Burkum says, "this 36 minutes [of music] will probably give you a good insight." -Nancy VanArendonk

THE TBALL TOP 7 —

7. THE NBA THAT'S SOME GOODD WATCHIN' 6. HOLIDAY CHEER BETTER THAN

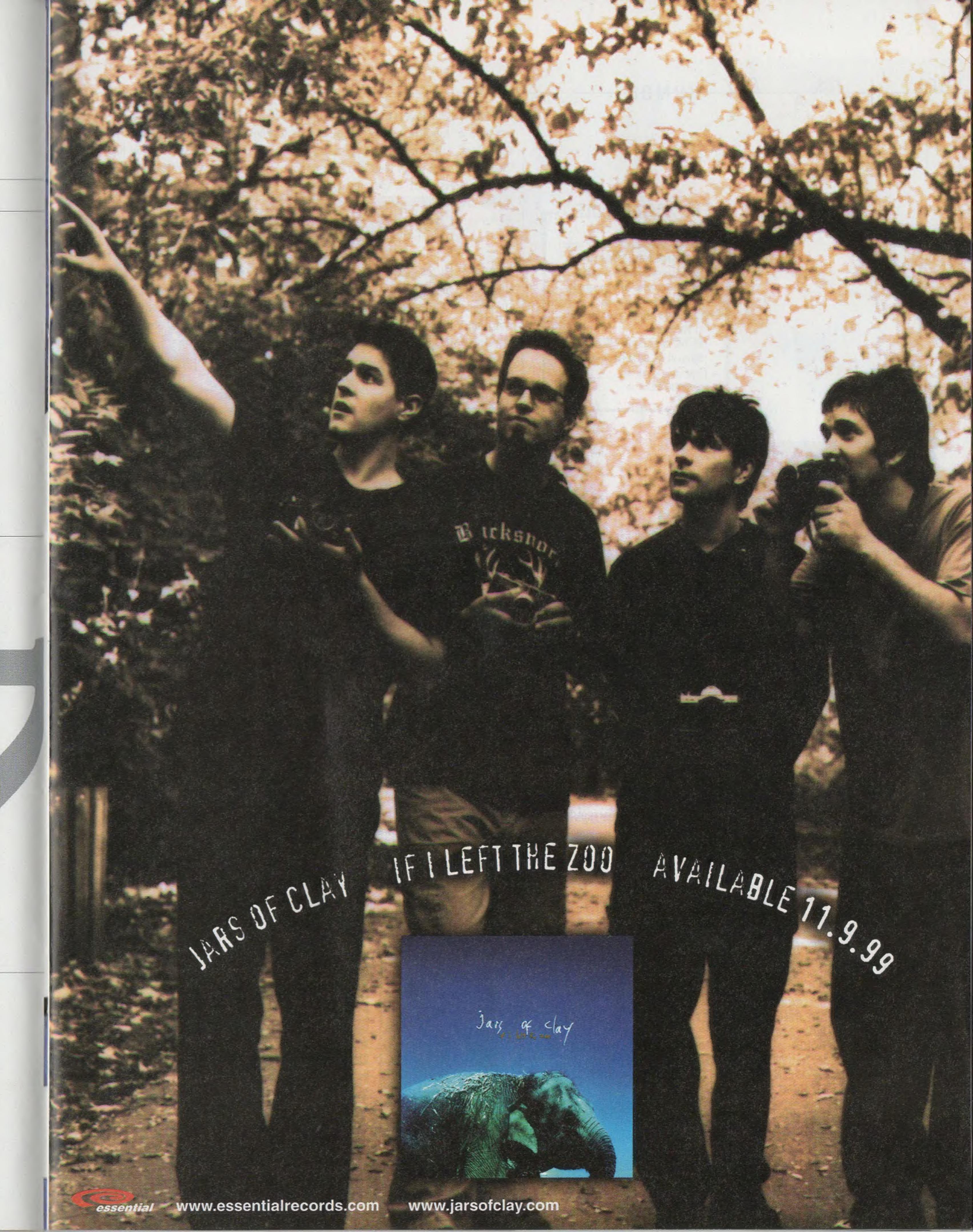
HOLIDAY SNEERS

. ZAGGING ZIG, SCHMIG 4. THE OTHER ONE THIS ONE STINKS

B. COMPUTER SOLITAIRE WHAT A MASSIVE WASTE OF TIME, CLICK

2. MADE-UP STUFF ALWAYS BETTER THAN SHAUN'S IDEAS HE SIGNS OUR

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THE TBALL MIDDLE 7

65. CARL AS IF THERE AREN'T BETTER NAMES 64. FESTIVAL WITHDRAWAL THE SHAKING AND HALLUCINATIONS SUBSIDE QUICKLY, THE SWEATING LASTS FOR WEEKS 63. AVERAGE COULD BE BETTER 62. CLICHÉS WHATEVER FLOATS YOUR BOAT 61. PAR AVERAGE 60. THE TIME ALF PUT WILLIE'S SOCKS IN THE BLENDER THE NINTH WORST THING HE EVER DID 59. CHRIS' IDEAS PAR



The people in Pompeii were whining about this?

	PROGRESSIVE ROCK CHART	
CHART	ARTIST & TITLE	RECORD
1	THIRD DAY	ESSENTIAL
2	PETE STEWART OUT OF MY MIND	FOREFRONT
3	MISS ANGIE DANCIN' IN MY HEAD	MYRRH
4	SUPERTONES CHASE THE SUN	BEC
5	CHEVELLE	SQUINT
6	DC TALK SUPERNATURAL	FOREFRONT
7	PLANKEYE SAY NOW THAT YOU'RE SORRY	BEC
8	SILAGE ORIGINAL	ESSENTIAL
9	JENI VARNADEAU SHAKEN	PAMPLIN
10	THE CHANNELSURFERS WHERE I WANNA BE	ORGANIC
11	SHADED RED REVOLUTION	CADENCE
12	B.O.B. MISSION TRIP TO MEXICO	KMG
13	THE DELUXTONE ROCKETS RUMBLE WITH THE DEVIL	TOOTH & NAIL
14	BRIDE IF I TOLD YOU IT WAS THE END OF THE WORLD	ORGANIC
15	BETWEEN THIEVES LET ME SEE	TATT00

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emotions of longing, sorrow, anticipa- ter lost her life. Prince Solomon Jay, his tion and boundless happiness. son, is recovering fast, though he has "Sometimes with songs there is a long- some brain damage. Charnitta, his miding to express what is inexpressible," dle daughter, is now recovering at Karens says, "the joyful and sorrowful home. mysteries of being alive, and to say Chunjay from Shadow of the Locust how hope illuminates the darker days." and Royal Ruckus is dropping his solo

Fanmail's version of "Every Breath You www.royalruckus.com/chunjay. Take" during the commercial breaks ... Tooth & Nail has signed the California- The Grits video "They All Fall Down," based Off The Record, reminiscent of directed by Eric Welch of Broken Poet Strung Out and Good Riddance ... The Productions, was seen everywhere this debut of Wisconsin's pop-punk band summer. BET's Rap City, as well as MTV's Hangnail, Making History, should be out YO! MTV Raps, Beat Suite and MTV2 all in late November ... The Dingees will be had it in regular rotation. DJs can order on a benefit album, Heal The Bay: The Grits' new 12" vinyl, "They All Fall Solution, to help clean up the San Down/Hopes and Dreams" at Francisco Bay, along with MxPx, www.undergroundhiphop.com/ Goldfinger, Pennywise and Blink 182, audio/singles. among others.

Dru Hill's Sisqo announced recently will be available to DJs; for servicing that Woody—who left the mainstream contact tobias@fabdoggrecords.com. R&B foursome to pursue a career in gospel music—is rejoining the group. Lisa Kolbo, the lovely vocalist heard On why Woody left, Sisgo said "he had on Sackcloth Fashion's Something For convictions in his own soul. And, he Everyone To Hate and E-Roc's decided he needed to do a gospel Avalanche, is recording her own solo album before he could sing or do any project with Syntax Records. The sound R&B music." Woody's hiatus to do a is an interesting mix of jazz and pop

solo album is allowing other group with hip-hop overtones. www.synmembers to do solo projects as well, taxrecords.com CDNow.com reported. "The Dru World Order consists of the four members of Sackcloth Fashion was 1 of 50 Dru Hill doing solo albums," Sisqo says. groups picked out of more than "However, everybody is gonna have a 200,000 artists to be on mp3.com's new Dru Hill song on each of our Groove Lounge, a CD accompanied by a

Recently, King Solomon Jay was in a artist on mp3.com's main page and was

son. The album conveys the conflicting car accident where his youngest daugh-

debut this winter. The Ocean Blue (In BRIEFLY: Slick Shoes is in the studio Search Of Stardust) will feature memwith producer Bill Stevenson bers of Royal Ruckus, Tunnel Rats, (Descendents/All) ... If you were Sackcloth Fashion, Fluidintelligence, watching ESPN around the time of The Shadow of the Locust and others. It's Women's World Cup, you probably heard available online at

Bi'Kuan, a new artist on FabDogg Records, will be releasing his first singles on a limited edition 12" vinyl. CDs

albums." The group's next album will be magazine distributed nationally in released in November 2000. schools. The group was also a featured

HEY, WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THOSE GUYS?

Fred Lynch is now working with Josh McDowell Ministries in Colorado

K-Mack, former DJ for the group, left Christianity for Islam, and is part of the 5% nation.

Fred and Barry have discussed doing a reunion album. You can reach Fred at Fred_Lynch@josh.org.



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NEWSBOYS.COM

the featured artist in the "New School" section for more than three weeks.

Speaking of Christian hip-hop on mp3.com, LA Symphony was also cho-signed with Gotee Records. His label sen as a featured artist. Also, their debut should drop in spring '99 ... song "San Diego" was selected for Word has it Peace 586 will be dropping mp3.com's sampler CD. Check out a new project sometime in 2000 ... www.mp3.com/artistspotlight for the Underground crew Mass Reality was in story and free downloads. From the the lab this fall and is planning to write-up: "One thing's for sure: LA release their debut project by year's Symphony is one of the quickest, slick- end. Check out www.massreality.com est and smartest crews to come up in for info ... Eternal Funk Records' recent times. And that should be music upcoming compilation Jesus 2000 will to your ears."

Flynn's mp3.com download page. Playdough (from Ill Harmonics) are Check out "Shake It Up" and "All I Am" hitting a nationwide tour all November flynn.html. Flynn's album Louder mixes tries.com/productions for the latest. elements of jazz and gospel with innovative hip-hop, a blend that fortifies his unusually intelligent lyrical approach. www.eartube.com

house music. www.nsoul.com

The deal's done. Sup the Chemist (formerly Super C of SFC fame) has in December.

www.sphereofhiphop.com.

Tywone, president and CEO of Holy Nation Records, is about to drop Tried, Tested And Proven. Tywone appeared cybercast in on Grapetree's Heaven's Hip Hop www.crosswalk.com, with almost 90 Compilation III with the single "Down minutes of music and a 15-minute On My Knees." www.holynation- Q&A. The site, which averages 4 milrecords.com

Tragedy will be releasing her debut Clay and Bob Carlisle. Diamond In The Rough on Southern

Gospeltality Records. For more info, email sgrmusic@flash.net.

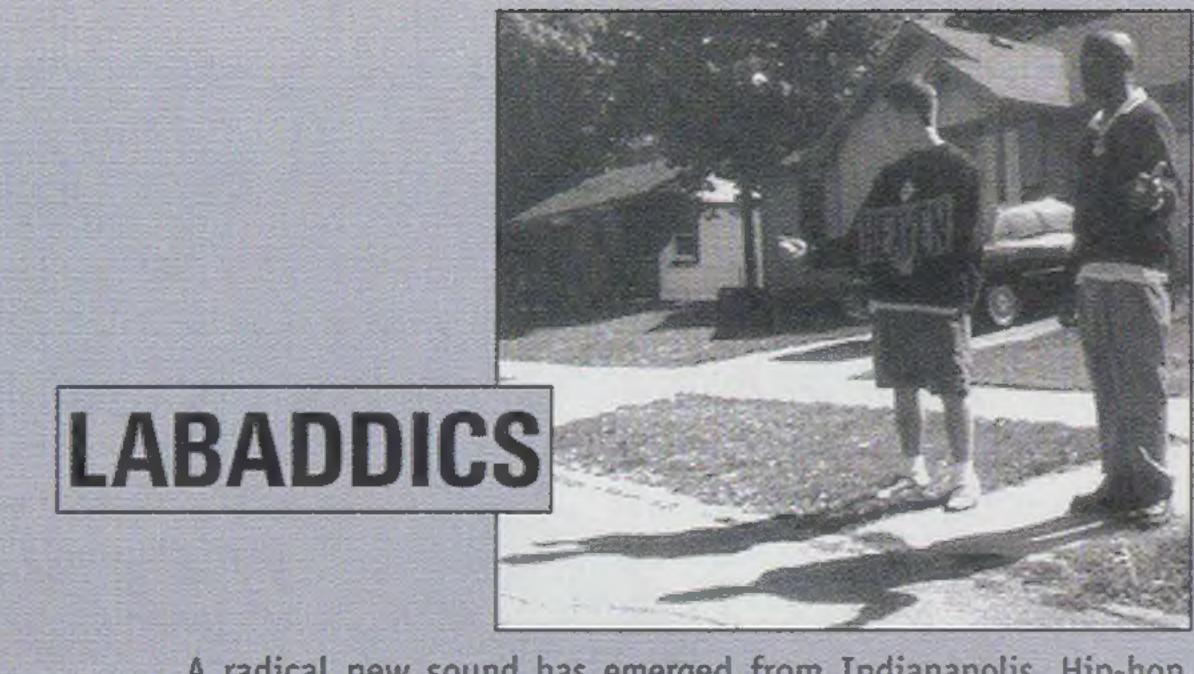
BRIEFLY: John Reuben recently feature Tonéx, Divine Order, Unity Klan, Jah Word and others ... More new joints have been added to Sackcloth Fashion, E-roc and www.mp3.com/artists/20/ and December. Check www.meatindus-



Nailed and Disciple, both of whom have great new records, are just two of Check the new Eclectica 3 "Deep the special guests on the new indie House Mix" compilation from N. Soul. Isaiah 53:5 (A Tribute to Stryper). It's a mix CD of independent house Others on the album include Poor Old music. Pounding bass and strong vocal Lu, Honeymooner, Dinner Mint, Fringe, samples are beat mixed to flow into The World Inside, One Bad Apple, more than 72 minutes of continuous Wonderboy Phd, Aimee Clark and Estes P@rc. For more info on the disc, go to http://1340records.com.

Speaking of Disciple, Rugged signed a label agreement for his Records is having a hard time keeping Beesyde Records with BEC Records. This Might Sting A Little in stock-with Sup's self-titled LP releases nationwide some stores placing as many as three separate orders in the first month of the album's release. "Disciple epito-The just-released Sphere of Hip Hop mizes the best of hard and heavy Compilation #1 is 17 tracks (71+ min- Christian music," says Rugged's presiutes) of hip-hop/rap straight from the dent, Michael Betts. "What makes us underground. Included on the disc are the most excited ... is that it proves the likes of Sackloth Fashion, Christian kids still want songs with a Solseekers of the Tunnel Rats, 3np!, heavy groove and a strong ministry John Reuben, and others. The CD is direction." This Might Sting a Little available through Sphere Records includes a free second disc, meant to ebmaster@sphereofhiphop.com) and be given to a non-Christian friend, which includes three songs and a salvation message at the end.

Disciple performed a live concert lion hits per month, said Disciple's cybercast was their second-most-lis-Son of Jesse will be releasing The tened-to event that month, earning Prodigal Son and female rap artist more hits than cybercasts by Jars of



A radical new sound has emerged from Indianapolis. Hip-hop crew Labaddics mixes elements of old school rap with synth compositions and a distinct Midwest street sound in an underground blend they call "No Coast." The duo-Fiti Futuristic (also the album's producer) and Dig Indaword, the base of their gritty, streetwise delivery—formed in 1997 with a desire to use their unusual geographical background to create a mass appeal. "[Our sound) is something that's going to attack your ear drums and your spirit and get you hooked," Dig says.

Solid and well produced, Event Horizon is a mix of heavy bass, thick beats, Gregorian chants and ethereal background vocals, as the guys use creative analogies to get the message of Christ across to their listeners. "We want to take part in the fulfillment of the Great Commission by bringing street evangelism to the lost," Dig says. "Church to church, arena to arena, city to city. We'll take it across the globe."

Between their goals and all the attention they've already received, the guys are eager to expand their fan base from a strong regional following to solid nationwide recognition. They are presently looking for backing by a major label and want to use the opportunities and resources such a connection would offer them to spread the Gospel to even more people. "Basically," Fiti says, "we're on a God mission."

-Rachel L. Martin



OUR FAVORITE **FALL VACATION RIDES**

- It's a Third World After All
- The Great Big Ferret Wheel
- Martha Stewart's Roller
- "Let Me Get You a" Coaster

	RHYTHMIC CHART	
CHART	ARTIST & TITLE	RECORD
1	GOSPEL GANGSTAZ I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW	B-RITE
2	GRITS THEY ALL FALL DOWN	GOTEE
3	KNOWDAVERBS EQUEENA	GOTEE
4	PRIESTHOOD BE AROUND	METRO ONE
5	GONNA BE A LOVELY DAY	GOSPO
6	OUT OF EDEN RIVER	GOTEE
7	CODE OF ETHICS HALLELUJAH 2000	WORD
8	THE CROSS MOVEMENT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	CROSS
9	RAZE PLACE IN MY HEART	FOREFRONT
10	UNITY KLAN ALL I NEED	ETERNAL

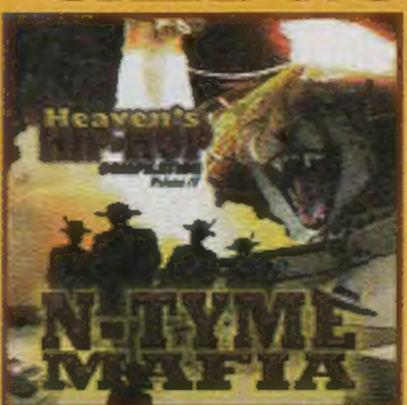
Charts, courtesy of Progressive Airplay Journal, reflect national radio airplay.

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Heaven's Hip Hop N-Tyme Mafia

Featuring ten hot new artists with styles ranging from upbeat Hip-Hop to raw Gangsta style Rap.



E-roc Avalanche

Rap Pages calls E-roc "incredible!" As seen on American Music Awards and MTV's "The Cut".



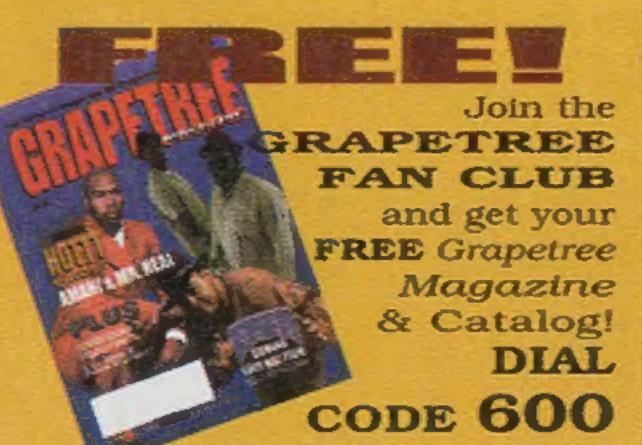
C.R.O.W. Operation K.A.P.

C.R.O.W. sheds light on the pimp game and brings listeners a gangsta rap style classic. The album also features Bruthaz Grimm.



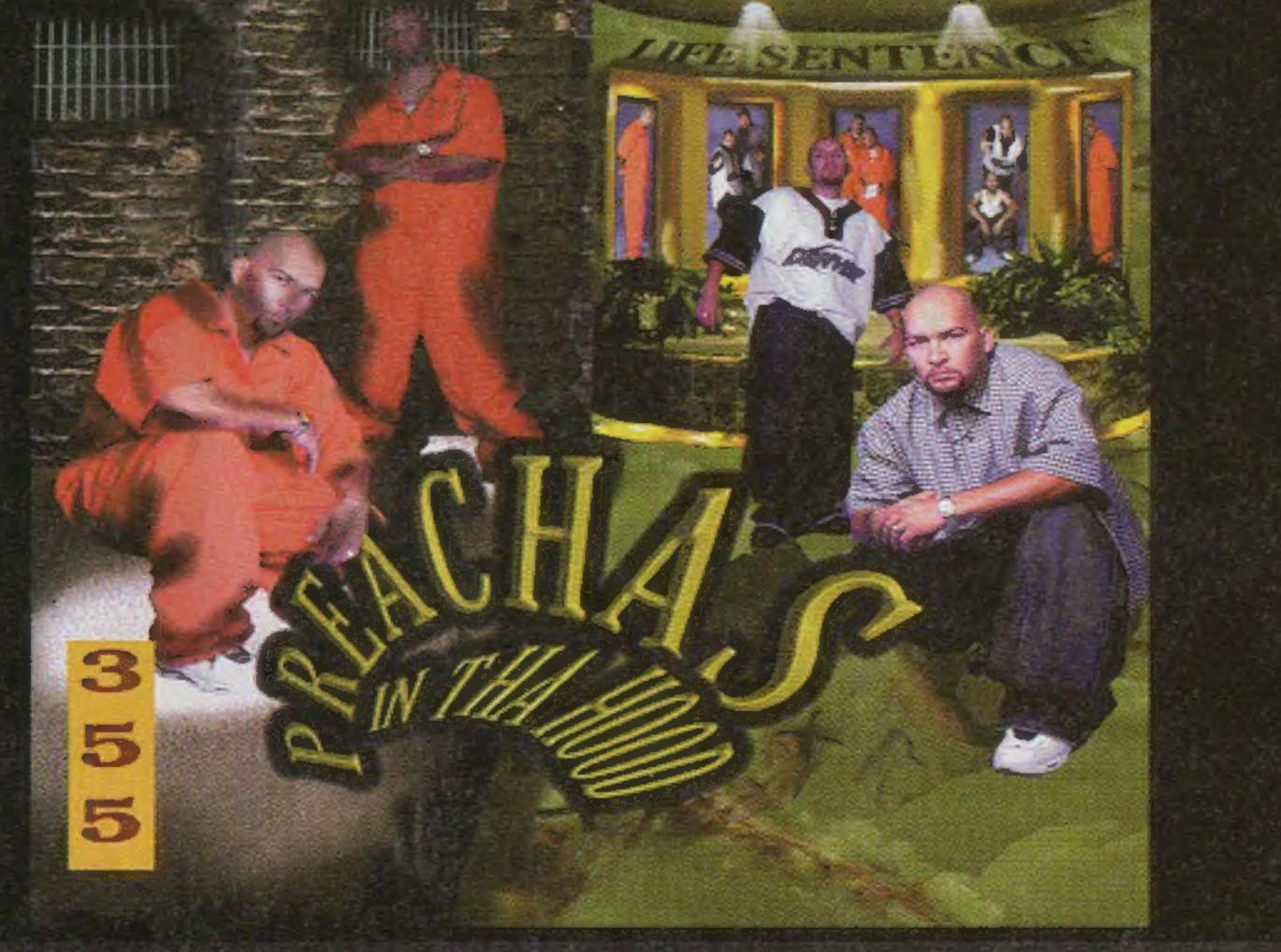
Mr. Real Humility

The directors of Geto Boys and Scarface videos say Humility is among the best rap album they have ever heard. Featuring Prime Minister, Antonious, Young Profit, and Xplicit.









L.G. Wise

True II Society

Lil' Raskull













America got its first good look at Beanbag this past summer at this year's Cornerstone Festival. That look came not with the band onstage but in the sweltering heat of a crowded merchandise tent where the Australian groove-core quartet sat quietly under a home-made banner-nothing more than a painted bedsheet—behind a collapsible 🧃 table. They had no merchandise, no shirts or COs for sale, but chose to sit and talk to anybody who came by. It was patently obvious that if you were looking for a band full of ego and attitude,



Wielding a fusion of metal and hip-hop, Beanbag is sure to draw favorable comparisons to the likes of Rage Against the Machine and Limp Bizkit. But their broad musical range—incorporating everything from indie rock to electronica, found sounds and junk percussion—gives them an edge of originality other acts lack. "Our backgrounds are very diverse and that comes through," says lead guitarist Michael Mullins. "We all come from very different subcultures. Our drummer [Phil Usher] is into a lot of pop music; Hunz [Ban Vliet], the singer, is very much into the electronica scene and has done some music for computer games; our bass player [Philip Hirvela] is into a lot of funk and funk metal; I bring the harder influence to the band. Our music will always have a groove element to it, but we have the freedom to move anywhere. That's what excites me the most."

Beanbag's spiritual edge is every bit as strong as its musical bite. The bandmembers' faith in God comes through clearly both in their lyrics and in the way they interact with their fans. "We've always tried to reflect a real sense of honesty both as a band and just as individual people. We try to spend a lot of time hanging out with people around our shows. That's where people really get to see what you're like and what you're really about and that's what makes the message powerful."

---Todd Brown

	LOUD CHART	+
CHART	ARTIST & TITLE	RECORD
1	PROJECT 86 PIPEDREAM	BEC
2	MARTYRS	METAL BLADE
3	P.O.D. SOUTHTOWN	TOOTH & NAIL
4	DROWNING	IONIC
5	DISCIPLE I JUST KNOW	RUGGED
6	SPOKEN PEOPLE GET READY	METRO VOX
7	STIR TEMPLE TABOO	KALUBONE
8	WARLORD WASTING TIME	SOLID STATE
9	NO INNOCENT VICTIM FLESH AND BLOOD	VICTORY
10	.ROD LAVER SONG 10	SCREAMING

Charts, courtesy of Progressive Airplay Journal, reflect national radio airplay.

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mail@purerock.net or find them on the Web at www.purerock.net

THE BIG WOODEN INDIAN HEAD ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS

Dear BWIH:

Why are boys so confusing? I'm being serious. Kate Bowman Fairfield, CT



Overall, boys are less mature than girls. Therefore, they generally cannot operate on the same emotional plane as their female counterparts. Their actions sometimes seem illogical or immature, but in fact they're just acting like any person 4-6 years younger than you would act. Give them time, or date their older brothers.

Dear BWIH:

My mom says that writing the number seven, like "7," is bad. Is it? Bethann Martin Oakland, MD

To some, writing "7" is very bad—almost evil. But then you have to remember nothing can be as bad as teenage pop stars or refried beans.

THE TBALL BOTTOM 7

- 117. SUGAR RAY TRYING TOO HARD TO SOUND LIKE
- 118. HOLDING YOUR BREATH FOR A VERY, VERY LONG TIME YOU WON'T LIVE TO REGRET IT
- 119. EDWIN'S PHASE OF REDUNDANCY PHASE GLAD THAT'S OVER, GLAD THAT'S OVER
- 120, OUR SENSE OF HUMOR YES, WE KNOW WE'RE DORKS 121. CATFISH THEY GIVE "BOTTOM FEEDERS" A BAD NAME
- 122. PLAIN POTATOES AFTER ALL THOSE SUGGESTIONS
- 123. THINGS THAT SEEMED FUNNY AT THE TIME HAVE YOU READ THE LAST COUPLE OF ISSUES?

break up. They are, however, going storming guitars and impassioned pleas through lineup changes.

Throwing A Wrench Into The American pointment and pain-to the "Tree" Music Machine, should be in stores by the where one finds deep meaning in God's time you read this. Be prepared for unconditional and healing love. something "completely different and www.ionicrecords.com amazing" from the band.

Bet you didn't know this: The title of Zao's new album, Liberate Te Ex Inferis, is on a bonus CD shrink-wrapped with the Latin for "Save Yourself From Hell."

Extol, Mesmerized, contains three tracks Box and JBTV, and the single has been that were previously unreleased in the active on the college and modern rock U.S., plus remixes of "Burial," charts. Electronic Arts, the world's "Renhetens Elv" and "Work of Art." The largest interactive entertainment softdisc will in stores in November.

metal" band Society's Finest. They've the Chicago Tribune ran a nice article proven themselves through their solid on the lads. musicianship and rigorous touring, opening for the likes of Zao, No Innocent Victim and Living Sacrifice. They played at South by Southwest and were region- Teeth has signed with Rowe Productions; al finalists in the Vans Warped Tour watch for an album in February 2000 ... Battle of the Bands. Society's Finest hits AP2 (Argyle Park) returns early next year the studio in January with producer with Suspension of Disbelief, on Tooth & Barry Poynter (Zao, Living Sacrifice). In Nail ... Outer Circle, Mark Solomon's the meantime, the band has an EP, with (Stavesacre) side band, is featured on

the human condition, Torn unleashes an shelves mid-November. 7

Contrary to rumors, Spitfire did not aggressive attack of heavy groove, of lead singer Carter McLaughlin. Lyrically, their album Tree takes the lis-The new Training For Utopia album, tener through a life's journey of disap-

Chevelle just keeps making new friends. Their single "Mia" was included first 100,000 copies of Megadeth's new album. The video for "Mia" has secured The new EP from Swedish metal band rotation on MTV's 120 Minutes, M2, The ware company, picked Chevelle as one of the bands to feature on their new Solid State has signed Texas "redneck game Skydive. And back in September,

Embodyment returns to the studio in November ... Metalcore band Gnashing of artwork by Embodyment's Kris McCaddon. the new Sony Playstation game, Cool Boarders 4 ... The new Frodus, And We If you're looking for a darker tour of Washed Our Weapons In The Sea, hits





Burkum asks excitedly. It's after 10 p.m. two weeks before Christmas 1998 and Audio Adrenaline has invaded Tejas

Studio, located on Gary Chapman's Nashville ranch, for the recording of their latest project, Underdog.

freshly recorded track, complete with a string quartet. Bass player Will McGinniss is behind a set of glass doors, glued to a computer running Avid Pro Tools. Rhythm guitar player Bob Herdman is home writing lyrics; drummer Ben Cissell is nowhere to be found, but is most likely taking a break after a few long weeks in the studio.

Fast-forward to the present. After nearly six months in the



studio—five months longer than their previous projects took to record—the men of Audio Adrenaline have finished what they consider to be their best project to date.

Ever since first signing with ForeFront Records, the group has churned out hits like "Big House" and "Never Gonna Be as Big as Jesus." With each album, Audio A's success and sales were a double meaning for the band. "It's a little reminiscent about steadily growing. Then, Some Kind of Zombie released in how we feel about ourselves. To a lot of people, we're a pret-1997—and marked the first Audio A album that didn't exceed ty big band, but we still [feel] not as talented as other bands. the sales of its predecessor. In fact, sales from Bloom to Zombie But, we've always worked hard to do the best we could and dropped by more than 100,000 units in Christian bookstores God's really blessed us." alone. "We made a deeper record," McGinniss says. "For some, A new Audio Adrenaline record isn't the only blessing in

group's scared some people record Chevette and put a bunch of smiling, happy go-lucky boys on the cover and it sells 200,000 more records."

However, they do not consider it a mistake. "God knows prior to any of our albums coming out what He wants to do," McGinniss says. "We just have to trust

Him to minister to the people He is supposed to."

The boys went back to the drawing board to produce Underdog, an eclectic mix of styles found on Audio A's previloops." ous albums. "We were trying to incorporate some of the things we loved from the past three albums," McGinniss says. "The anthemic and loop sounds of Don't Censor Me, the guitar-oriented rockness of Bloom, then we added what we've done with Zombie—being creative in the studio."

Underdog also marks the guys' first attempt at producing their own material. "We produced seven songs on this record, and that's a big change," McGinniss says.

And the change was less than easy. "We had to work through things together and fight and apologize," Stuart says. "It was really hard on us relationship-wise, but God worked through all of those things to create something better than if we had an outside producer for this [entire] album."

Brickell believes producing helped open communication lines within the group. "It's caused them to take their ability to communicate to the next level," he says. "They have been on autopilot when it comes to going in the studio. When you produce yourself, all those things go out the window and you've gotta start over."

The result of many hard months in the studio is an album

that explores the theme of how the world views Christians. "A lot of times people look at Christians as being the underdog, being the weaklings," Herdman says. "That's OK. To serve God you die to yourself and become a slave to Christ."

Herdman goes on to explain the title *Underdog* actually has

McGinniss, Stuart and Herdman's lives. Together, they have formed FlickerRecords.com, an independent record label with a strong emphasis on Internet marketing. Debut artist Riley Armstrong, who has already joined Audio A on the road on several occasions, will release his national debut in early 2000.

The three were introduced to Armstrong, a Canadian, by Hokus Pick; they were instantly impressed with his independent album. "It was great," Herdman says.

"It's a cross between Steven Curtis Chapman and Beck. He writes a lot of really cool ballads like Steven, but he uses more

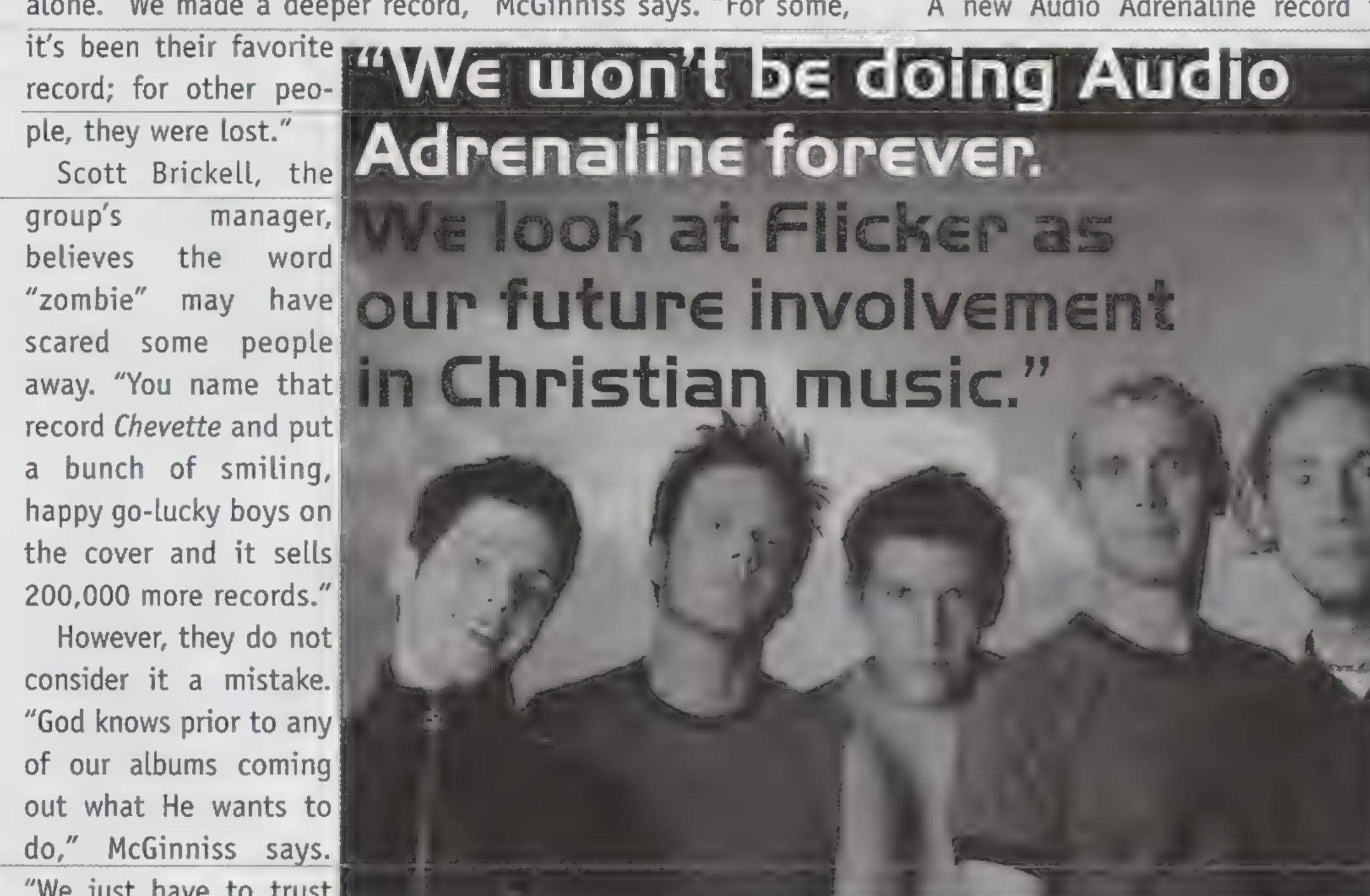
The label evolved out of the desire to help new artists like Armstrong. "Bob, Mark and I have a vision to help younger bands the way we've been nurtured by people in our lives," McGinniss says.

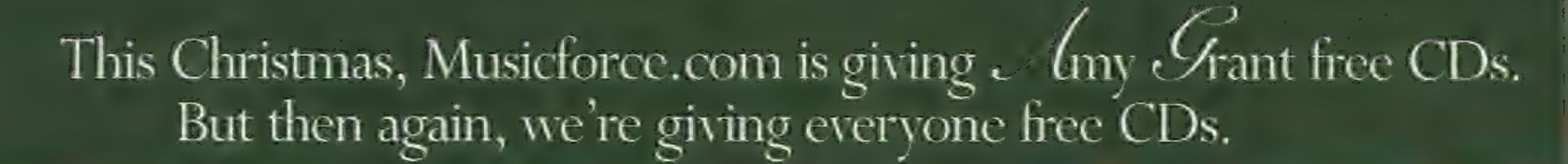
"We see what God is doing through Gotee records, BEC and other labels," Stuart adds. "We see the heart behind those record labels, and we want to do that."

Though there are a lot of Christian indie labels already out there, the guys at FlickerRecords.com don't feel threatened. "We have the leverage of Audio Adrenaline that we could use to promote our artists and record company," Herdman says. "It's all up to God eventually—He's going to decide if He wants it to fail or prosper."

The three also see the label as their future. "We won't be doing Audio Adrenaline forever," Herdman says. "We look at Flicker as our future involvement in Christian music."

But it doesn't appear Audio Adrenaline will be closing shop anytime soon. "I think AA's best moments are still ahead," Stuart says. "We are at the plateau. We are going to ride it and see where God takes it." 7







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Sample tracks

Tour updates

Artist interviews





weren't gang-bangers but instead something completely different-a God-loving, ministry-minded Christian band. "They got really nervous around us," drummer Wuv laughs. "They totally thought we were thugs or something. We met Manson, and he was nice to us, but

I think even he was intimidated."

good reason for people to be nervous. Birthed to a heavy band like us. They usually just stare on the tough streets of south San Diego, at us at first, but then they start moving P.O.D.—made up of Wuv, vocalist Sonny, gui- around and pitting. The problem is, when you tarist Marcos and bassist Traa—is a multi-eth- get that type of crowd, they don't know how to nic rapcore band who were hard, street-wise pit. They end up just throwing punches. It gets punks before coming to Christ. The explosive a little crazy. It doesn't happen very often, nature of their music clearly draws on the though, because we are very aware of our audistreet side of the band, with the type of unre- ence and try to keep everything safe." lenting, aggressive musical energy that only It's the explosive elements in their music bands like Korn or Rage Against the Machine that has landed P.O.D.'s newest release, The have captured in the past. An example of the Fundamental Elements of Southtown, on mainband's intensity was seen at a show they did stream powerhouse Atlantic Records. The group once on the second level of a building in had garnered a strong following in the Venice Beach. The crowd reacted so fiercely Christian market with the likes of Snuff the that part of the venue floor caved in, forcing Punk, Brown, Live At Tomfest and The Warriors everyone to evacuate.

Wuv remarks: "Sometimes we will play with Take away P.O.D.'s faith, and there would be rap bands or some group whose fans aren't used

EP, but their graduation to a major general

market label was inevitable. Their music is a force to be reckoned with.

Southtown hit in September and landed in the Billboard Top 200, as bringing it up to make sure it wasn't an issue. I was expecting them to tell us to tone down the preaching. I let them know we weren't going to change, and they said they didn't want us to change. They mentioned how everyone is preaching something, so why not preach God. I believe that, but I also know that's not how it works in this world. As Christians, we have to work twice as hard to cover half the distance."

For the recording of The Fundamental Elements of Southtown, P.O.D. moved to Hollywood for nearly four months to work with famed producwell as a Top Ten spot on Billboard's Heatseekers Chart. Atlantic has the er Howard Benson (Zebrahead, Sepultura). The band stayed at the muscle to take the group to massive mainstream exposure, but more Warner-owned Oakwood Apartments, the place where people working on importantly, Atlantic expresses no desire to hold the group back from Warner-affiliated albums or movies usually stay. There they were cotheir bold Christian message. "At first, Atlantic didn't even bring up our occupants with the likes of R. Kelly, Tyrese, Hanson, Ziggy Marley and faith," says Sonny, the band's charismatic vocalist. "It was us who kept the members of Orange Nine MM, a former Atlantic band (currently on NG Records) who developed a friendship with P.O.D. while there.

> P.O.D.'s major label Hollywood experience hit the peak of irony when the guys actually played a Guns 'n' Roses pinball machine with Guns 'n' Roses drummer Matt Sorum. The band joked with the GQ-styled Sorum about his goofy bandanna-wearing rocker image portrayed on the game board.

studio. It's name? MTV.

L III III die unificiale PARTY AND ASSESSMENT

The culture shock of their time in Los Angeles ended up inspiring a new song, "Hollywood," which the band wrote right before recording. Wuv like clubs. The group was a favorite at San Diego's now-defunct SOMA club, remarks, "Living in Hollywood for that much time was a completely new which helped break bands like Korn, Rage Against the Machine, Pennywise experience for us. We've played up in Hollywood many times, but we have and the Mighty BossTones. P.O.D. was actually headlining shows at never stayed there for any significant amount of time, especially under the circumstances in which we did. We saw a lot of craziness, a lot of partying, and got a whole new perspective on this side of the music business." The song stresses the sentiment that no matter what happens in life, no matter where they are, their hearts for God will never change.

Despite all the craziness, P.O.D. found something in L.A. they didn't really expect—namely that people were receptive to the band's faith. "A lot of people don't agree with what we believe," Wuv says, "but

they're down with us because they know we are down with our beliefs one hundred percent. There is a level of respect there because they can tell that we are sincere. When people know that you're serious, they give you mad respect."

An example of this respect was during last year's Smokin' Grooves Tour when the guys were invited to

perform right before headliners Cypress Hill at the San Diego stop. They turned out a high-energy set, but then after the performance tried unsuccessfully to remove their gear from the stage. For some reason, 15 of Cypress Hill's hard gang-banger crew surrounded the stage and wouldn't let P.O.D. get their stuff. When Cypress member Muggs came out and saw what was happening, he immediately lashed out at his crew. "When Muggs saw what they were doing," Wuv recalls, "he cursed at his homies, and said, These guys are doing it for God. His crew jumped out of the way and let us do our thing."

er, who passionately embraces Jewish faith. Wuv explains, "Howard may not accept our faith, but he met us on the level that we were doing it for God. As a Jew, he believes in the same God that we do, so it too was a spiritual endeavor for him. He really respected that we put our whole heart



Wuv

neer, Bobby Brooks, who embraces no faith at all. Bobby used to ask the likes of Kid Rock and Rollins. Likewise, they are tentatively set to join us about our faith all the time."

faith because the band wasn't trained in the ways of traditional the staircase to each new level, and we get a lot more respect because of Christian rock evangelism. When P.O.D. started, they were unaware that it. Our fans know how hard we've been working, and they are all happy for there even was a Christian music scene, especially since no Christian us. It is an honor and a privilege to be doing music for a living. It's an bands ever came down to the tough neighborhoods where P.O.D. lived. added bonus to be doing it for God." 7

"but they are down with us because they know we are down with our beliefs_100_percent."

In the early days, the only places P.O.D. played were the local all-ages

SOMA before the Christian market even had a clue who they were.

Sonny "When we first started playing," Sonny recalls, "we were playing to the local skinheads and punk rock kids. They were shocked we weren't talking about destruction and chaos and violence. They were shocked to

hear us talk about a God that loves them with such aggressive music. I think we really confused people at first."

The guys themselves were raised outside the faith, so accepting their belief system was an independent, conscious decision which is how the band presents it to other people. "We don't shove [our beliefs] down anyone's throat or tell them what to do,"

"All we do is tell people what God's done in our lives personaly. They know we are real people and that we do real things. Rock 'n' roll is about going against the flow, and what could be more

> against the flow these days than being positive and doing something for God?"

The band speaks with such heart-felt honesty that it's difficult for non-Christians not to show P.O.D. respect. In fact, members of the seminal Los Angeles band Far came up after a show to say that

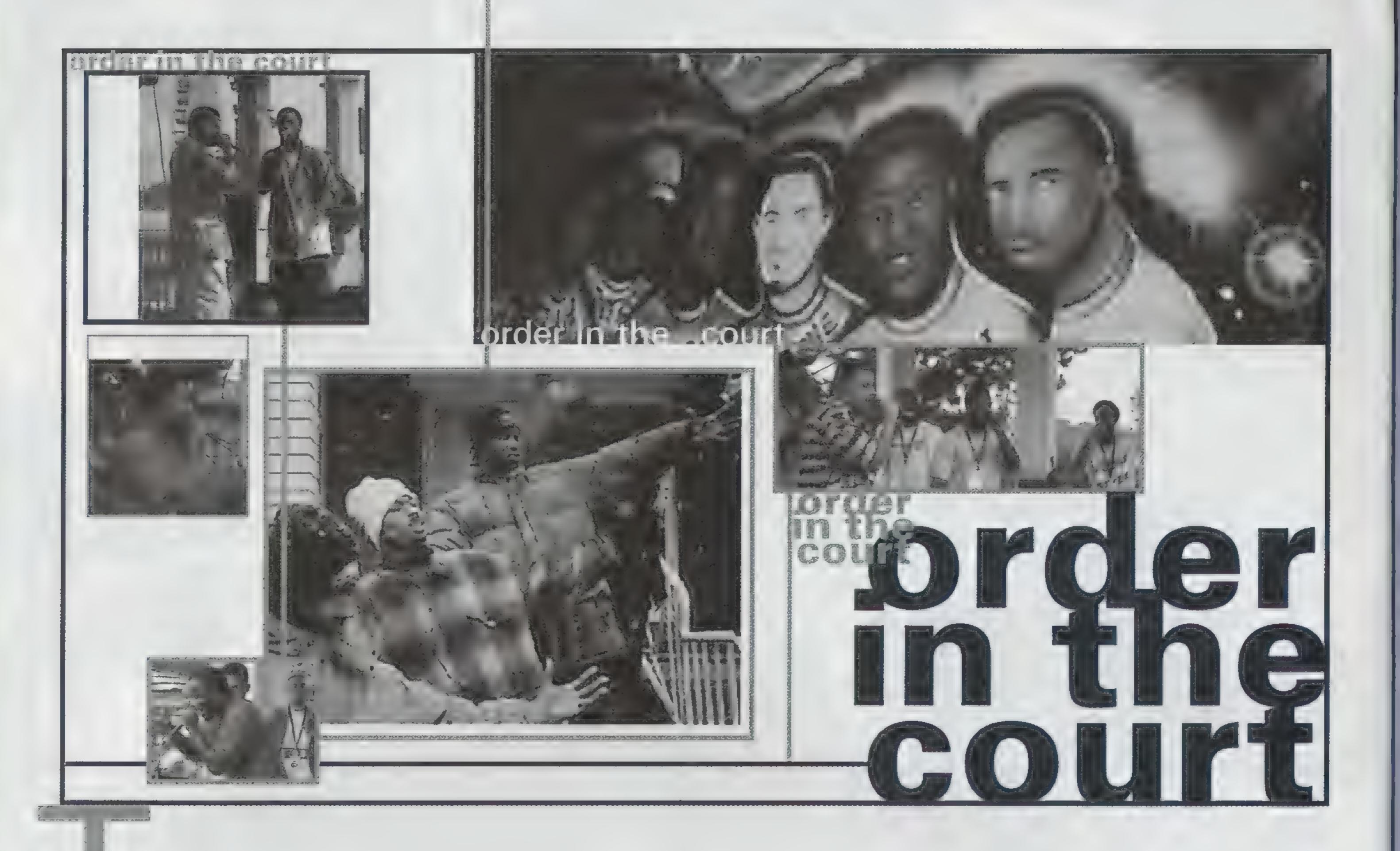
A mutual respect was also shown by Howard Benson, their produc- though they disagreed with what P.O.D. had to say, they respected the band's sincerity and strength of their convictions.

"Since day one," Sonny says, "the passion that drives us to do what we do is our love for God. In these seven years, the reasons have never changed, and they never will. We want to let people know about our faith. If people like the music, they might give us a minute to hear what we have to say."

With Atlantic Records now behind them, P.O.D.'s commercial potential has reached the next level. They will have a song on the soundtrack to the new Oliver Stone film *On Any Given Sunday,* starring Al Pacino and Cameron into our message. He even led us in prayer each day with our engi- Diaz. They were recently featured in SPIN and have upcoming shows with some massive tours and have a song on a new Playstation game.

Non-Christians are generally open to P.O.D.'s presentation of their "We didn't take the elevator up to where we are now," Wuv says. "We took





by Marcia Bartenhagen

Inis year has been a whirlwind for Cross Movement. With a hot album, a new ministry organization and now solo projects underway, Cross Movement's fame is spreading like wildfire. It may be a lot of work, but this group that successfully emerged from the Christian hip-hop underground is willing to do whatever it takes.

By sheer providence, seven rappers-The Tonic, Earthquake, The Ambassador, Tru-Life, The Phanatic, Cruz Cordero and Enoch-who were each pursuing their own hiphop careers came together to form Cross Movement in 1994. Enoch explains: "Me and The Phanatic were already in a group. We met Tru-Life and The Ambassador at a concert. I was working at this mall and [The Ambassador] walked in one day. I said, Don't you rap? He said, Yeah, for the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." They began rapping together with several friends, and at Enoch's suggestion, began calling themselves Cross Movement.

Record companies courted the group, but the crew instead decided to form their own record label. "We feel as though a record company would try to change our image and message," Enoch says.

The Tonic was appointed president of Cross Movement Records and CMN Distribution was used to take the album to the public. "The way The Tonic deals with us works out to the benefit of the artist," The Ambassador says. "If you go out to the business world, it will work out primarily for the benefit of the label. The Tonic has flipped the script and applied the biblical principal that says deem others better than yourselves."

Cross Movement Records sent the group into the studio with a limited budget to produce Heaven's Mentality in 1997.

Cross Movement's House of Representatives

is one of the year's surprise

success stories.

But these

rappers have more

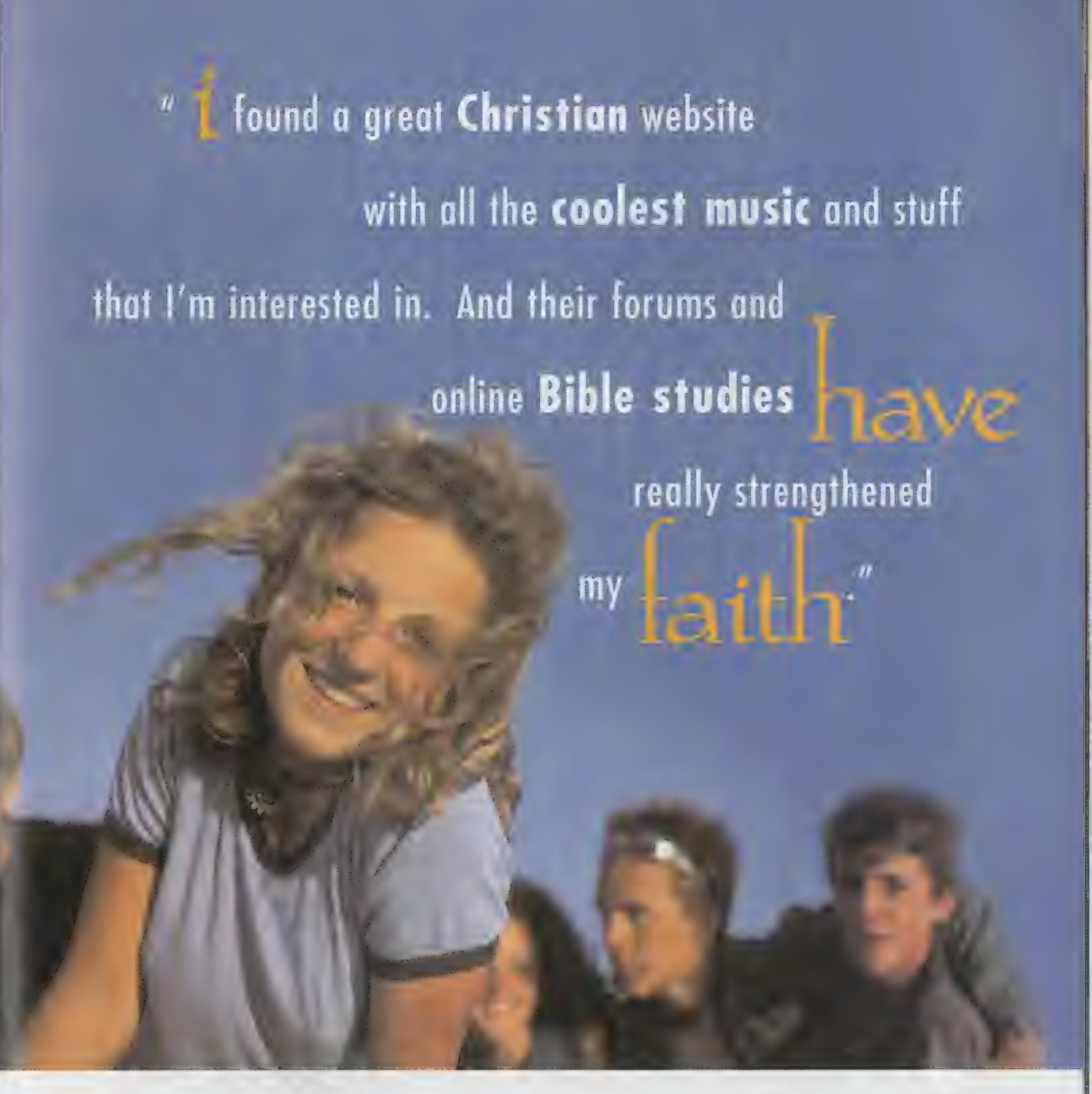
on their agenda

than selling albums.



The Ambassador

clockwise from top left: Ambassador. 2: The Ambassador, The Phanatik, Enoch, Cruz Cordero, Earthquake, Tru-Life. 3: Live at Kingdom Bound. 4: (top to bottom:) Earthquake, The Tonic, The Ambassador, The Phanatik. 5: The Tonic 6: The Phanatik



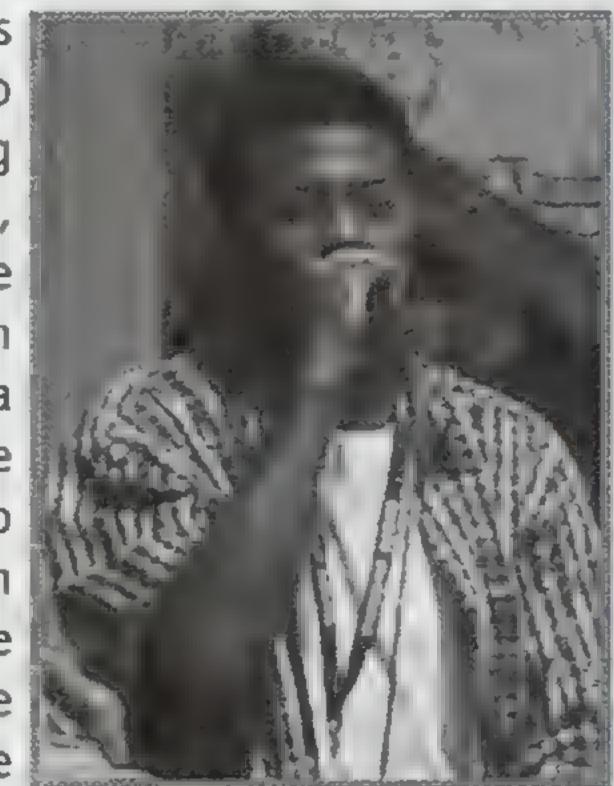
Announcing the largest selection of Christian products in the e-world.



"Things were breaking down on us while we were recording," remembers Earthquake, who also serves as the group's producer. "All kinds of havoc happened." But, the end-result was an impressive East Coast style—one of the first such recordings to hit the Christian market.

When it came time to enter the studio for their sophomore

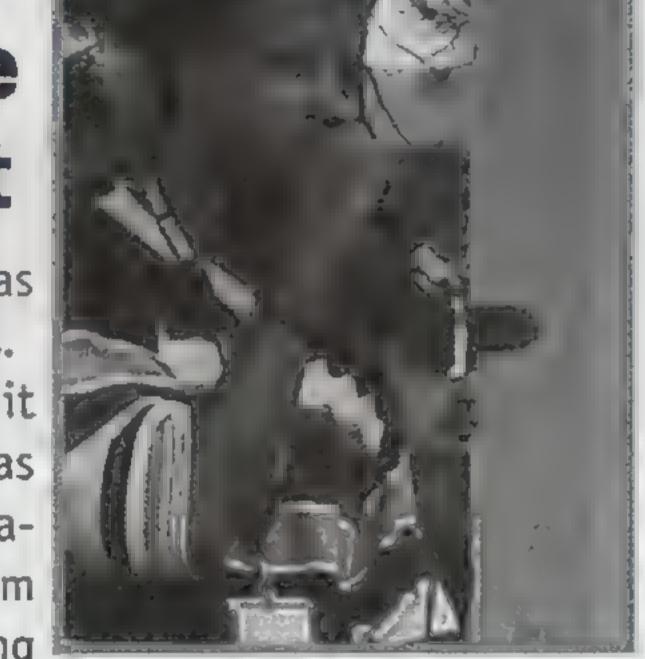
project, the boys realized it was time to take Cross Movement to the next level. Still not wanting to part with their record label, an opportunity arose for the group to do a joint deal with Seventh Street Records, a Diamante-distributed label. "We moved from CMN distributing to a co-label deal with Seventh Street, because we outgrew one another and agreed this was the best way for us both to move



order the court

forward with what the Lord has for us to do," Earthquake says.

House of Representatives hit the shelves in February and has exceeded everyone's expectations. This summer the album quickly became the top-selling



project for Diamante Music Group, which distributes more than 300 albums in the Christian market. "If you would've told us a Ambassador says. "Not ones with master's degrees, but year ago we'd be distributed through Diamante and be their teachers who have spent time studying the culture and the number-one seller, we probably would've laughed at you," The Word of God."

Tonic says. Even more amazing is that the album is

We've never made a video of the first release this magnitude before. That was God." ever from brand- this magnitude before. That was God." Street.

And what was their marketing plan to gain such rapid success? "We haven't done a thing," The Tonic says, amazed. "We stayed true to the ministry and to what we thought God was forwarding with us."

The Ambassador believes their success is partly due to making a connection with their listeners. "One of the things our music has done is revealed we're familiar with our surroundings—we're not these spiritual monks ... we've been out there. Our music has captured the mind of Christ and his attitude toward whatever scenario we may be rapping about."

work with producer Kevin Osgood of Aslan Productions. The result was an impressive 35mm video for the single, "House of Representatives."

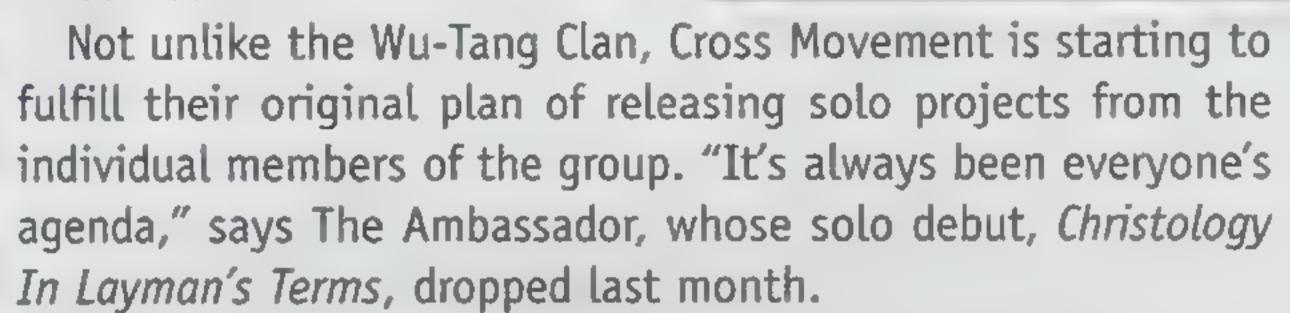
"We were blown away and excited, because we've never

made a video of this magnitude before," Enoch said. "They rented a Masonic Temple. Upstairs it's a big hall—it looks really congressional.

"As we were approaching the building, we saw three truck loads of equipment. We didn't believe that all of this was for

us. A lot of people worked voluntarily; Kevin had contacts with students who were into videography. We shouldn't have even had the money to make that video. That was God."

The video has been in regular rotation on Christian video shows, as well as mainstream video networks BET and The Box.



The Tonic is excited about the group unity that has remained during the recording of the solo project: "Everybody's supporting the fact [The Ambassador] is doing a solo project and is ready to get behind it, just like they would the Cross Movement projects."

When not in the studio or on the road, The Ambassador can be found running the group's new non-profit organization, Cross Movement Ministries. "The ministry is the launching pad from which [Cross Movement] comes," he says.

The ministry currently sends out not only the rap group as an entity, but individuals and teams as well. "If you want to call somebody to come out and talk to a youth group [or] to teach workshops on key items, we can send someone," The

The point is to reach people. "Our goal is to get a sound system and set up somewhere on a weekly basis on some street

> corner where there's a flow of traffic," The Ambassador says. But their ministry doesn't stop when the concert ends—the group sees a need for a place where people can go to receive solid training in the fundamentals of the Christian faith. "We want to have a learning center where people can go who get converted or want to hear more," The Ambassador says.

With the expansion of the ministry, an expansion to the record label may come. While there is talk of adding addition-And the group continues to reach the MTV generation. al artists to the roster, the core mission of the group remains Earlier this year, the seven headed off to Pasadena, Calif., to the same. "We've enjoyed being this small no-name label and watching God do everything," The Tonic says. "A lot has been happening since the video has gone into the mainstream. We'll continue to push into those arenas ... but only for the purpose of reaching the lost and the dying." 7





Creation West



Deliriously rockin' the mic

Hair Club For Men president Sy Sperling



We promised we'd hit the festivals this summer—and we did, even though it wasn't the easiest thing we've done (the easiest thing being sitting here on our cushy chairs pretending to work). Our crack team of festivalgoers and such, led by the incomparable Cosmo Joe, this summer endured a fate worse than being trapped in a burlap sack with an angry ferret. They slept in the truck, were stranded in Minneapolis, missed flights and lost shipments of product. But you know, in the end it was all so very, very worth it. Here are our favorite moments, in chronological order:

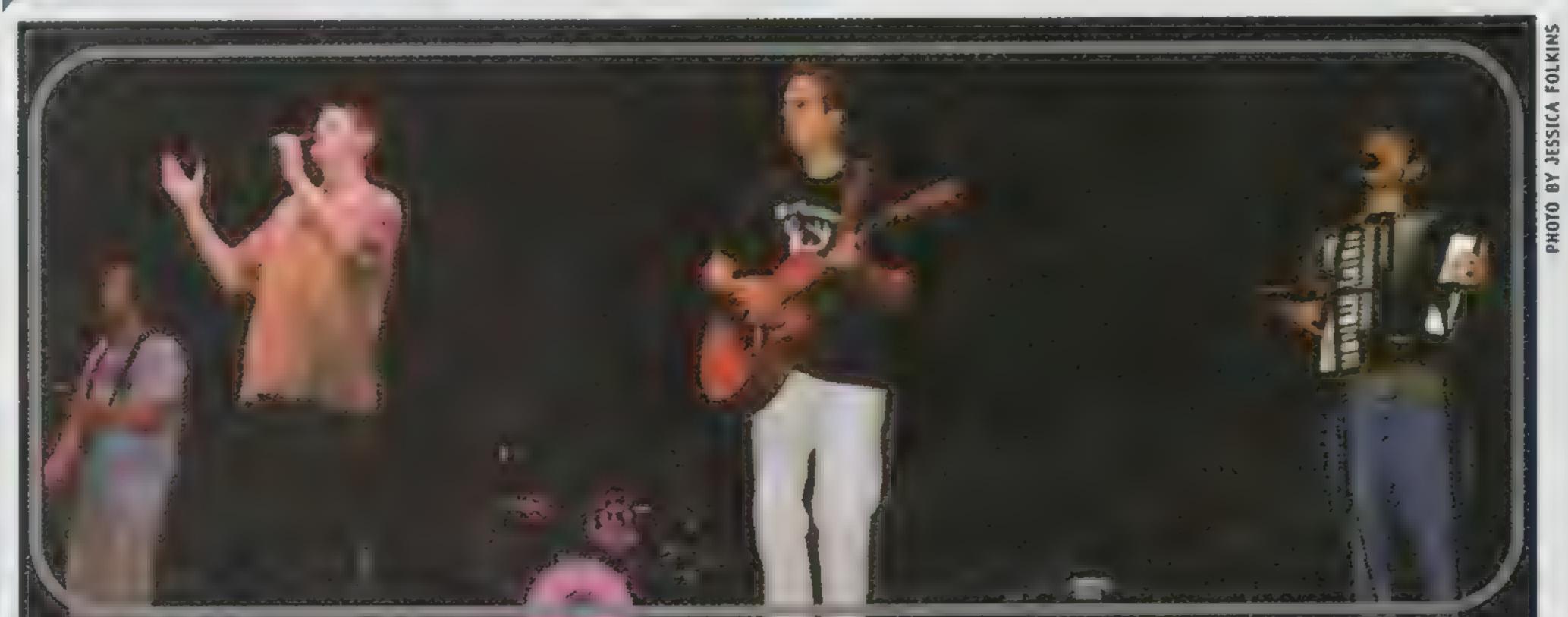
Ichthus ... The 30-year-old festival held in Wilmore, KY, changed things up a little by adding a new stage with a more youthful band lineup. Now we're talking.

Atlanta Fest ... The fest held at Georgia's Stone Mountain Park provided something no other fest could offer: A massive carving of men on horses on the side of a mountain. Now that's a festival!

Creation East ... 70,000 people and going strong as Creation East hit for the 20th year in Mt. Union, PA. If you enjoy twohour shower lines, the sound of people 24 hours a day, some serious heat (oh yeah, and good music), you'd love Creation!



Step back-P.O.D.'s on stage.



BACK OFF! I have an accordion.

Cornerstone ... For the alternative scene, you can't ask for more than good 'ol Cornerstone Festival in Bushnell, IL. Where else can you see P.O.D., Tragedy Ann, the Ragamuffins and Sixpence all in the same day? It was easy to spot the first-timers; they were the ones with eyes the size of saucers. This is definitely the fest of hippies, punks, goths and love.

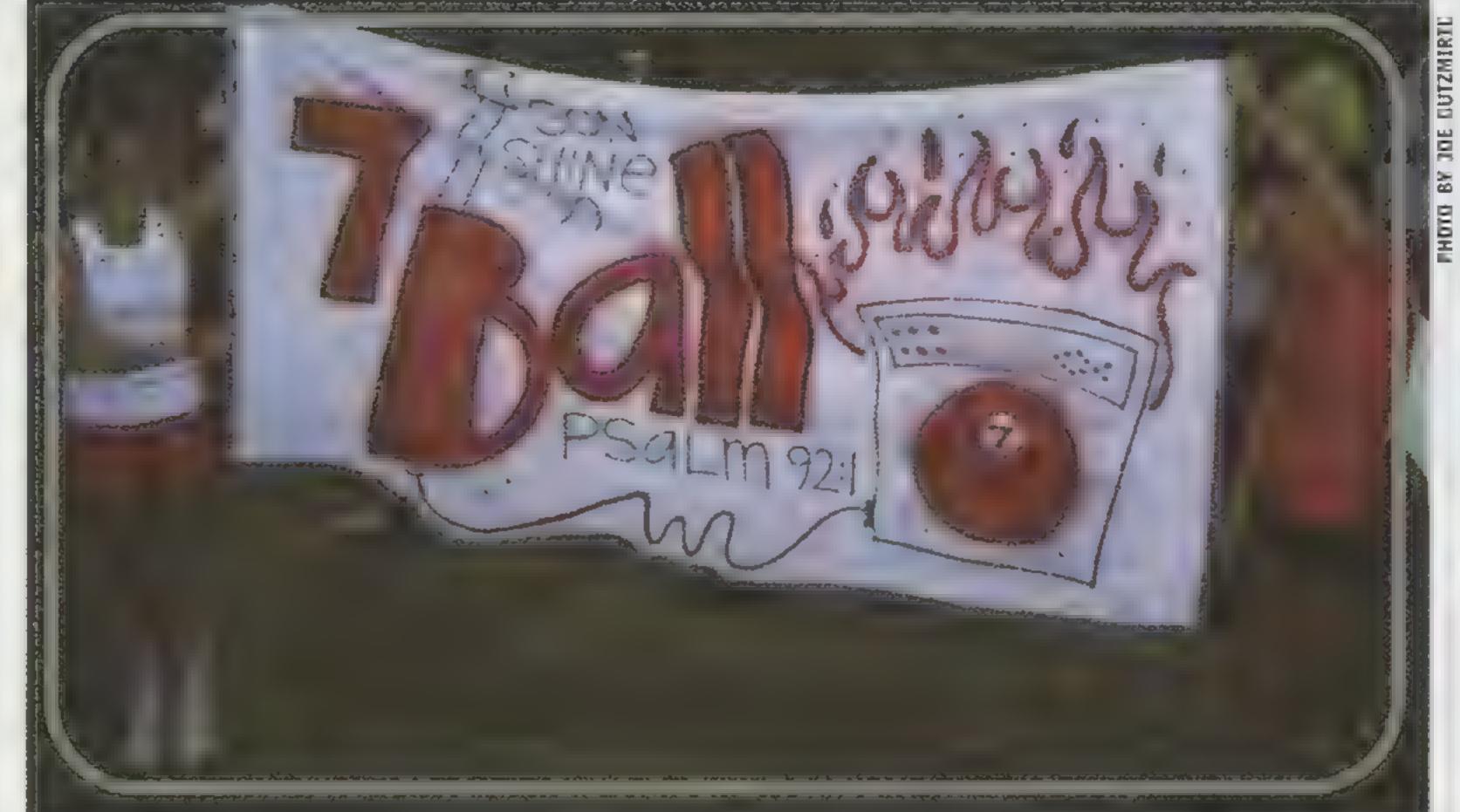
Sonshine Fest ... We've never seen so many kids go ballistic trying to win the prized 7ball guitar and amp as we did in Wilmur, MN. (Go 7ball Sharks!) The fest was cool, but we didn't get the big deal about the Mall of America. Yeah, it's big, but it's really just a mall.

Creation West ... We now know why the Gorge in George, WA, has been named the No. 1 venue in America four years running. Incredible! We've always wanted to say 7ball blew the roof off the stage at a show, and we came really close at Creation. When Dawson McCallister got up to speak on the 7ball stage, the wind blew the roof off. It was crazy, but the antelope were spared.

Rage Fest ... You might think it was hot this summer where you live, but unless you've tasted the air in Phoenix you will never know heat. 106 degrees in the shade (but at least it was a dry heat). We're really grateful this was just a one-day festival.

Purple Door ... Purple Door in Lancaster, PA, was Cosmo Joe's favorite fest this summer. We think it might be because he's from there; the fresh Pennsylvania air (did someone step on a duck?) made him really homesick. The fest had a killer alternative lineup, but Sixpence was truly missed.

> -on-the-scene reporting by Josef P. "Cosmo Joe" Gutzmirtl; from-his-cushyoffice reporting by Cameron Strang



Our grand prize winners. They made a banner; they made shirts; they painted themselves; they made thousands of 7ball stickers (copyright infringement pending).



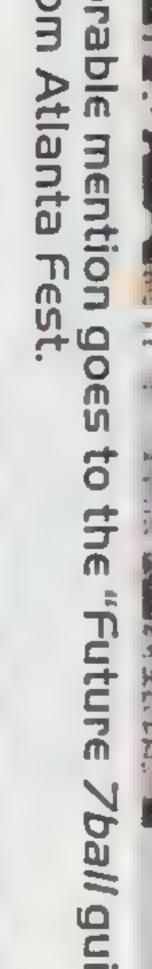
Very tiny 7balls

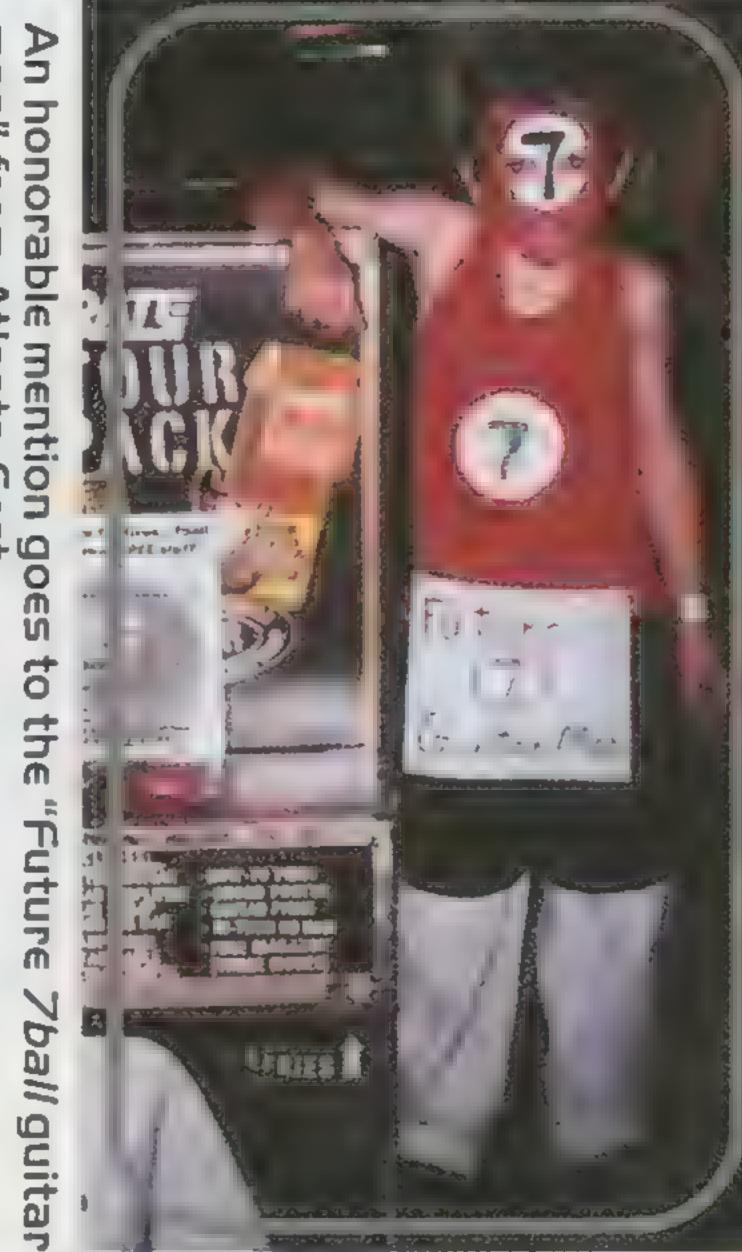


Um ...

Atlanta Fest







Our first prize winner-who had

22 7balls on his body. Yes, that's

a 7ball belly button ring. And yes,

he's a youth pastor.





U.S. debut on one label more than ligently crafted fresh rock, the a year ago, British band Fono (for- guys showcase themselves to such merly known as Seven) fell great perfection that the through the cracks of a merger. Monarch's punters cannot fail to There to catch them was KMG be impressed with their perfor-Records, who brought new zeal to | mance." This statement is not an introducing the hand in a big way. uncommon sentiment, and it is Now the Fono-hype-machine is this wave of critical and grassroot back in full effect, and it is time accolades that Fono will ride into for the mates from Milton Keynes, I the U.S. U.K., to come correct.

to the States should be a no- what the band thinks of all this. brainer, though, because this band \ "Being over [in the U.K.], we don't has already impressed fans, critics, know about the hype unless peoand industry-types in Europe and ple like yourself mention it," the U.S. They are seasoned, with Currie says. "We're kind of immune three years of experience on to it, and we just get on with it." European stages, including open- This attitude of "getting on ing for a Bon Jovi concert that with it" carries over into their drew 50,000-plus.

lowing on their show and their tality: "So many bands set out by original sound. "Musically we have putting together their own agena sound that isn't easily compared | da, such as, We'll sound like this, to anyone else," muses Del Currie, we'll sing about this, we'll look like lead vocalist. "We're verging on this, and we'll appeal to these peothe heavy side but we're still very ple. Everything Fono does is genmelodic without falling into the uine, from what we sound like to cliché rock thing. Live, we're full what we look like, and from what of energy; we put 110 percent into our lyrics are to where we are with every show."

A writer from Britain's Metal naturally from our hearts." Hammer offered some support to

Originally buzzed and primed for this claim: "A robust blast of intel-

With all the expectation sur-Bringing their brand of Brit-rock i rounding Fono, one has to wonder

focus as a band. Currie described They've built most of their fol- their easy-going, "get real" men-God. We write songs that come

—Treble Bandoppler

iteil the try of i hell deliteition of Morshippers



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"I've always been real involved in the hip-hop culture," says Philadelphia native odically in Greek and Spanish (all the Urban Disciple, who has been rapping variety makes for what he calls "a tri-linsince he was 13. Now 25 and living in gual type of flavor"). The album centers Tampa, Fla., Urban Disciple is still involved, as a Christian artist and youth minister.

Urban Disciple says hip-hop has four universal elements. "One is breakdancing—the dance of the culture" he says. which is the voice of the culture."

the spiritual element. Having a relationship with your creator—with Jesus Christ. You can do all the other four elements, but if you don't have Christ in the picture, you're still going to be empty. There's still hopes to reach a group he closely relates going to be something missing."

Urban Disciple's newest, The Missin' kids are that I work with [now]. Through Element. Cornering a somewhat neglected all that, God really placed a call in my niche in Christian music, Urban Disciple | heart and showed me that, This is where offers straight-up East Coast rap—though | I can use you." the album also boasts Mediterranean and

Spanish guitars, with lyrics delivered periaround the message that Jesus is the missing element in most people's lives.

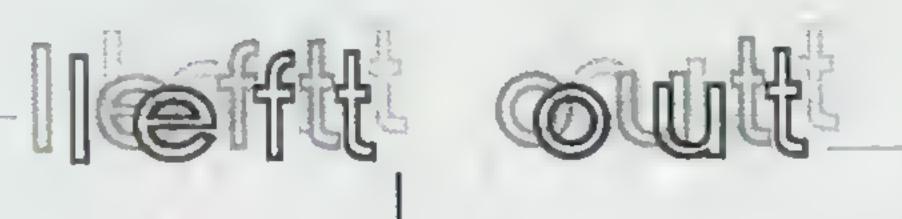
He takes that message to the streets through Crossover Community Church, where he's youth minister. He leads a weekly service for more than 150 teens, "The [second] is graffiti art—the art of many from the inner city. "We have a hipthe culture. The [third] is DJing—the hop style youth service with a live DJ on music of the culture. Then the rapper, stage—we do praise & worship with the DJ," he says. He hopes to reach the kids He believes there's more to life than where they feel most comfortable by these four aspects. "The fifth element is sponsoring open mic nights, so kids can rap, and breakdancing classes.

Whether on stage performing a concert or on stage leading praise & worship with inner city youth, Urban Disciple to. "I grew up in an urban area, so I was That "something" is the theme of faced with a lot of [the] same things the

--- Marcia Bartenhagen









sound just like MxPx and Slick Shoes. But the one thing they take very seri-Of course, Left Out uses two guitarists ously is the Gospel. "Our ministry goal (sometimes more than that when play- is to spread the Word of Christ," ing live), which means they have a Kaping says. The band focuses on kids heavier feel than those groups. Then who are deemed "losers" by their there's the fact that vocalist Bryan | peers; Kaping says they're intent on Grey doesn't like to sing. "I'm not a big fan of singing," he says of his rough vocals. "We want to play happy poppy friendly music and yet bleed our throats. We're pop-core."

Left Out began at Tom Fest in 1995 as a pet project of Grey, also in The Blamed. Since then, they've released three albums.

Now comes the confusing part: two group members live in Chicago (Grey and guitarist Jason Seiler), but bassist Brent Kaping lives in Northern whatever God opens up."

They seem to be pretty laid back, feel called, is to serve." having a somewhat loosely formed

The members of Left Out think they band and no serious touring agenda. reaching those kids because "they need Christ as much as anybody."

> Grey agrees: "We should never be afraid to share the Gospel with anyone. Jesus never was."

> Kaping says that in today's society, "it's not cool to be a Christian and that's just the way it is. So what? What's cool in life? It's all fleeting. If we're just trying to be cool, I would do something totally different altogeth-

Left Out not only wants to reach California. Touring is also difficult kids, but also other bands who tour because all of the current members are heavily. "They don't get a chance to married and have full-time jobs. But really have their spiritual needs met, Grey shrugs, saying they might be so we try to fellowship with a lot of touring for "four weeks, two weeks— | bands," Grey says. "Really, just to minister is to serve, and that's where we

--- Melody Alexander





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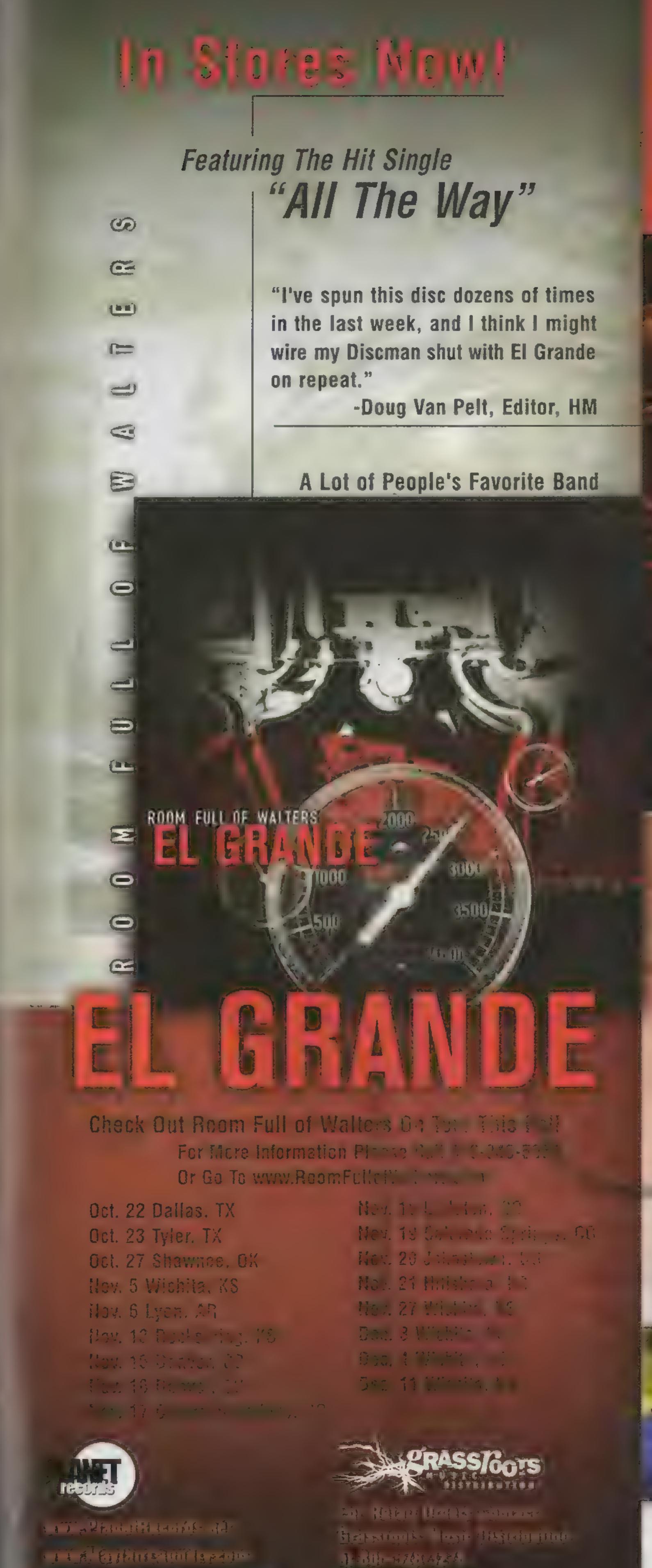


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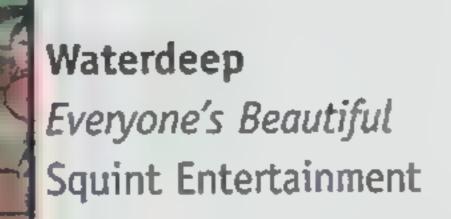
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Damask Rose POINT OF VIEW www.DamaskRose.com



debut label release, Everyone's Beautiful, may seem You Would Be Found True." simple. Despite expectations normally associated | Everyone's Beautiful is overflowing with sonic with big-time label debuts, the band refuses to | variety, and actually comes close to capturing portray anything flashy or showy here. Instead, | the full musical spectrum—from melancholy and their rock/worship/acoustic sound is merely an soothing to raw and edgy—reflected in outlet for the group to pour out their souls. The | Waterdeep's live show. Some albums fall into a lyrics paint a picture of real life—the hardships, | rut after the first three tracks, but Everyone's the pain, the questions, the bad days. Yet the mes- | Beautiful uses a plethora of sounds, lending this sage of hope breaks through, and not in a cheesy | album unique, added dimensions. Don and Lori's or superficial way. She spilled her coffee in her | strong counter harmonies throughout give the Chevy on her way to work at 8:05 hits pretty close music a layered effect like none other. to home.

cal vulnerability and openness shows great depth | ty of life rings true from beginning to endand spiritual acumen. A legendary indie band with reflecting not only deep spiritual truths, but also an already rabid following, Waterdeep has always the quest of pursuing Christ in all aspects of been down-to-earth. Everyone's Beautiful—their everyday life. label debut—actually just adds another flavor to an eclectic musical catalog already some six albums deep.

One of Waterdeep's strengths has long been their proficiency in writing lyrical ballads, which most obviously reflect the introspective, soulsearching depth of the members. And while those are indeed represented on this album, there is actually something here for everyone.

Everyone's Beautiful kicks off with a few rote, sing-songy tunes, including a cover of Van Morrison's "Whenever God Shines His Light," the soothing "Sweet River Roll" and the lullaby-ish "Go Find John."

Then, the electrics get plugged in and funk rock gushes out. On "Confessions of a Broken Down Man," vocalist/guitarist Don Chaffer belts out his humanity: I give up, I give in, I can't do this anymore. "Wicked Web" is another edgy, grooving wail, with wife Lori Chaffer on leads this time. The song erupts in a blast with this raw appeal for truth. It's a spin-off of Shakespeare's famous line, "What a tangled web we weave," with added alliteration. The straightforward, unflowery lyrics, thick beat and unrelenting passion combine for one of the album's most profound moments.

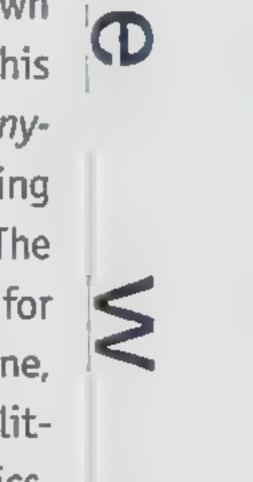
The title track provides a softer balance of

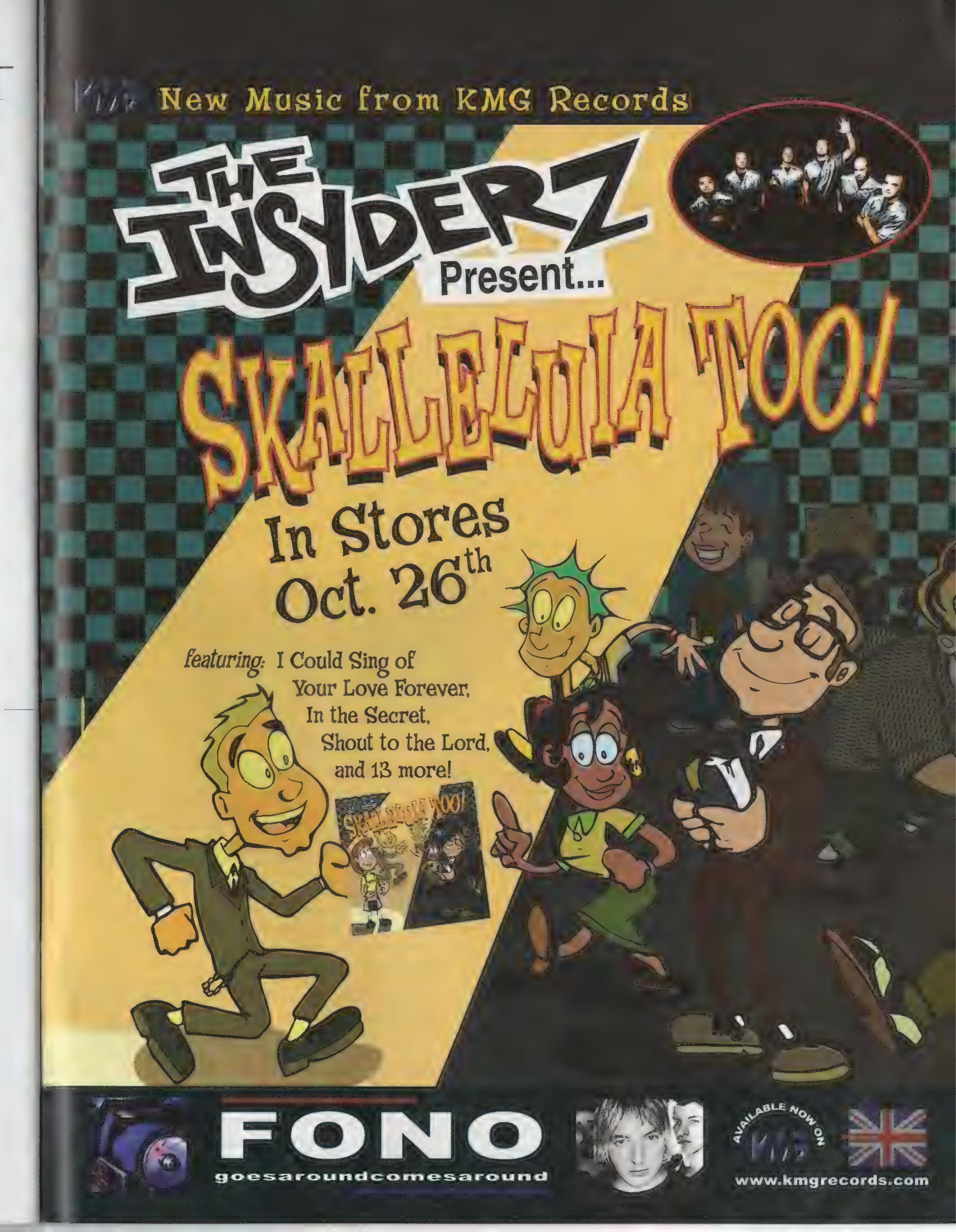
Waterdeep's organic rock foundation. The Chaffers shine in "Hush," a track whose bottled energy represents the group's calling card: distinctive dualing harmonies that are subdued while still high-energy. The album comes full cir-At first glance, Waterdeep's | cle and closes with the tender, worshipful "Still

The album's open vulnerability is at times This release is actually far from simple; its lyri- | shocking, at times gut-wrenching, but the reali-

—Tia Stauffer









The Miscellaneous Moth and Rust Gray Dot Records

> The Miscellaneous' name is appropriate, as this group is an assorted lot, combining talent from around Europe. The album is as diverse as the mem-

bers' nationalities, and each song has a very distinct personality and unique sound.

The most peculiar facet of Moth and Rust is the presence of two lead singers: one male, one female. Not just prominent BGVs, but a true exchange of lead-mic. Stef Loy handles the majority in this exchange, and brings a Waiting-esque vocal delivery to the plate, but adds enough passionate wail and oral contrast to create his own flavor. Sooi handles her lead and background vocals impressively, and gives a mature, rich performance. Her voice has a definite Celtic quality, reminiscent of The Cranberries and Sinead O'Connor, and is quite beautiful, sassy and soothing. This well-honed vocal teaming is coupled with thick guitars, airy percussion, quirky effects and indie rock hooks, to produce a gentle, yet moving, sound.

This album also boasts self-contained maturity. The album starts out simple—with a cliché pop-rock song or two—but then evolves sonically with every track that follows. As the project draws to a close, one may not be sure if they are still listening to the same band.

The breadth of talent and style offered and covered in 40 minutes is, quite frankly, astounding. Big props to The Miscellaneous for such a wellrounded display of personality and talent. Moth & Rust delivers thoughtful spiritual messages and thoughtful, artistic music. What a concept.

—Treble Bandoppler

the straw theory

The Straw Theory The Straw Theory

With the piano-based pop of The Straw Theory, comparisons with Ben Folds Five are inevitable; they're also largely

unfair. The Straw Theory weaves complex dramas of spirituality and the human condition, a thoughtful discussion of the Christian life in modern America, and undercurrents of melancholy joy and hopeful sadness-is just fresh-sounding enough to send listeners scrambling for comparisons.

Several of the songs balance against one another, poking at an idea from more than one direction. For example, three songs are about various stages of selfesteem: The swaggering "Joker's Wilde" is about struggling with self-doubt, which can be exacerbated by an unsupportive church family; the floating "Man on the Moon," with guest vocals by Leigh Nash of Sixpence None the Richer, dreams of the idealized self in Christ; "Star Struck" warns of overconfidence, promising to always trust in God (echoed later in "Reasons").

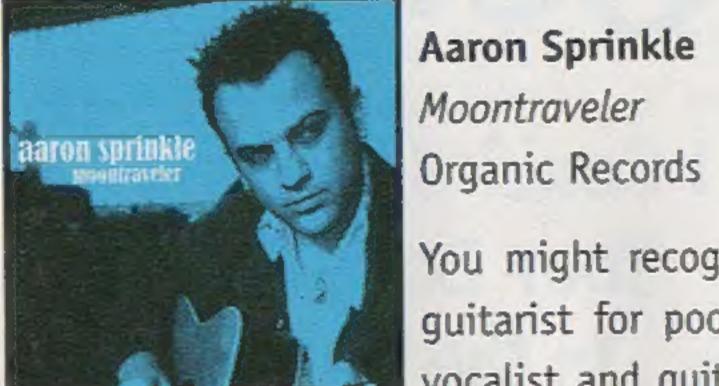
These are followed by the two-sided coin "Easy" and "Falling Forward" (which has Hit Single written all over it); the former warns of allowing the gifts God gives us to become idols in themselves, while the latter rejoices that God can use even our very failings to help us grow closer to Him.

Although the group sticks close to the piano, they do thicken the stew in a number of ways, including the prominence of the electric guitar (from the bracing, dark solo in "Joker's Wilde" to the rhythmic counterpoint in "Falling Forward") and the extra boost of a lush, cinematic string section.

While the complexity of The Straw Theory is artful and compelling, careless listeners may become confused. And those uncomfortable with such Bible books as Job and even certain Psalms may find sections of the album to be kind of a downer (even their romantic song is called "Mournful Love"). But those searching for a soundtrack for the whole of the Christian life-doubt and faith, worship and tears—will find something for just about every mood on The Straw Theory. Let's see Ben Folds do that.

-Chris Well W





You might recognize Aaron Sprinkle as the former guitarist for poor old lu, or more recently as the vocalist and guitarist for Rose Blossom Punch. But

until you've heard his new solo debut, Moontraveler, it's a safe bet you have yet to hear his best. The album is a bittersweet collection of 10 songs filled with melancholy and poignant disclosures of one man's personal struggle with sin and redemption.

The album's message is summed up in "Solace." I can't decide if You're the missing piece buried in my mind/ Immersed in sand I try to reach, try to take Your hand/ And it makes me ill the way You love me still/ Solace came with a drop of blood and a taste of shame/ When You took my turn, You struck a match and you let it burn.

For his solo effort, Aaron has forsaken the hook-laden guitar-crunching pop of his previous bands' efforts and opted for a more stripped-down acoustic palette of sounds. But have no fear. This album still rocks like anything Sprinkle has lent his hand to. The result is a wistful blend of Jason Faulkner-ish simplicity meshed with the alternative flair of Beck or Mike Knott. Regardless of the influences Sprinkle draws from, the results are like powerful grenades of lyrical confession lobbed into the heart that explode with passion and brutal sincerity.

-Keith Giles



Havalina Rail Co. Jackson Rubio

While some bands are content to languish within compositions. familiar constraints until they collapse under their own weight, Havalina Rail Co. rebuilds themselves

from scratch with each release. On America, the band's fourth record, the wagons head West, mining early American music for inspiration.

The California sextet sounds a good deal more relaxed than they did on the chilly Russian Lullabies. Where that release pondered weighty existential - ous, as they do on the Stephen Foster nod "Flower of the Desert," they matters amidst angular arrangements and gravelly vocals, America settles for simple campfire storytelling. The bulk of the compositions are paeans to the land itself ("Mississippi River," "American Skies," "Let's Not Forget Hawaii"), personifying the countryside in the grand tradition of the early pioneers. | would do well to work with an outside producer who could curb some of Though it purports to reflect the music of the entire country, America is haytheir more ambitious fancies. Though their reach often exceeds their grasp, seed territory, a kitschy patchwork of the Steinbeckian West done up with at least Havalina Rail Company is still willing, in this age of musical stagfiddles and banjos. Save for a track which allegorically likens a bullfrog to nation, to extend their arm and grab with gusto. the Nazarene (not one of the album's finer moments), Boris comes from across the sea/ brings his milk to you & me/ with farm fresh goodness & a pinch of love is about as philosophical as America gets.

Lead Railroader Matt Wignall betrays a fondness for folkies like Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger, his yawning vocals stretching around such wry

phrases as I never killed for pleasure/ I never killed for fun/ but when they take a man's family, it's time to get the gun. Possessing a voice bereft of tonality, Wignall's sandpaper pipes take some getting used to, and the lack of dynamic range hampers a handful of otherwise flawless

Despite their frequent musical redirection, Havalina Rail Company is a solid ensemble, and they prove their mettle through some rather intricate arrangements. Percussion simmers and pops throughout each track, buttressed by furious guitar plucking and Orlando Greenhill's frequently underrated avant bass work. When the band lets things fly fast and furiare at the top of their game.

At 24 tracks, America sports its share of clunkers, chief among them a meandering hip-hop track and a groaner of an ode to Hawaii; the band

—J. Edward Keyes



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Raiderz Of The Lost

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If you buy one hip-hop album this year besides Cross
Movement's House of Representatives, make it Prepare 4
tha Spillage by Raiderz of the Lost. The intro lets you

know right from the get-go that Raiderz are prepared to take the hip-hop community, if not the world, by storm. "Raiderz Anthem" starts off with a military theme featuring an army of MCs. With a nice R&B chorus, these men are gonna march into the enemy's camp and straight rip it up. Using the sample of marching as the beat throughout the song is straight innovative.

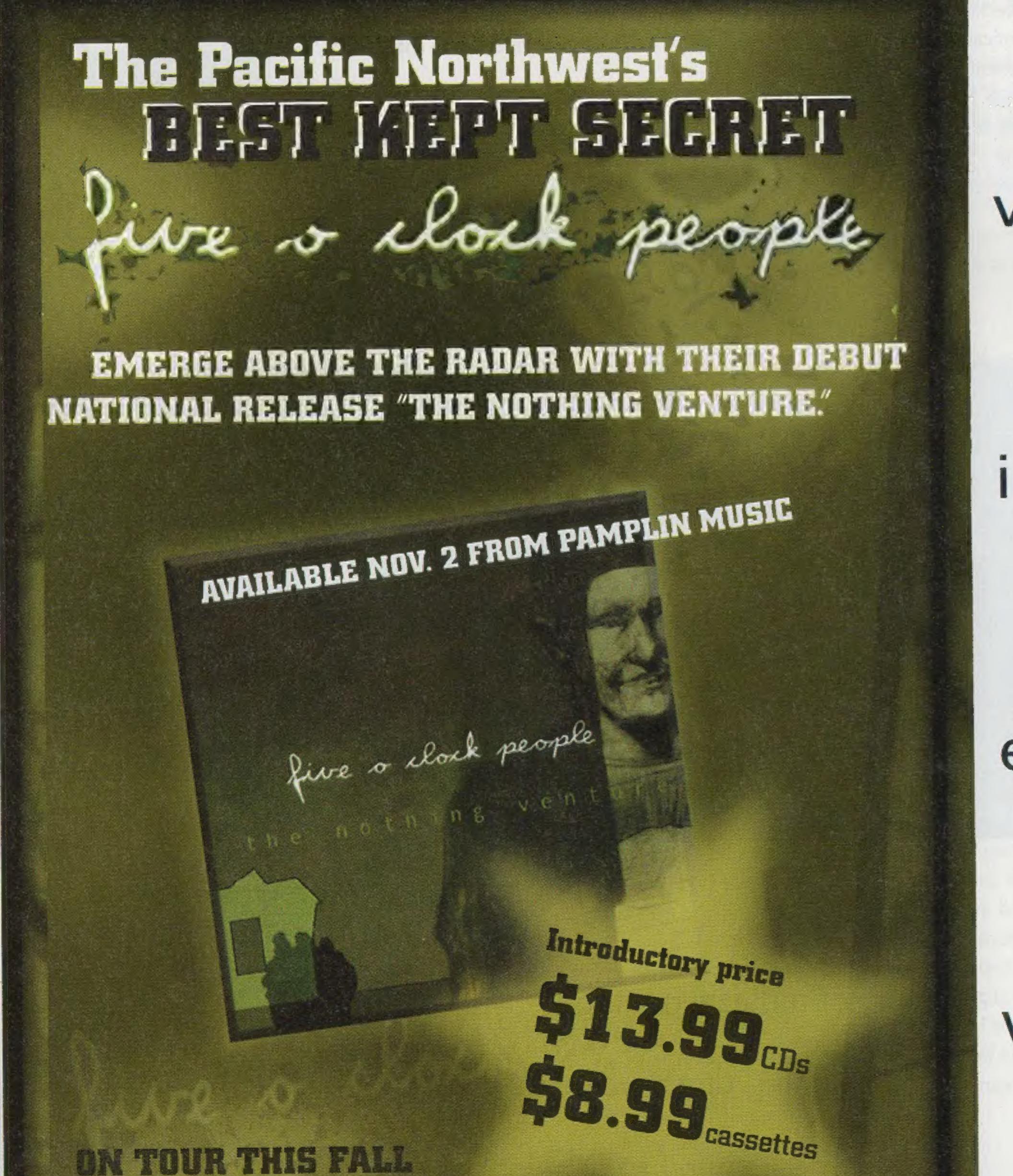
"Frontline Soldier" is a call to war. This could be the battle hymn for holy

hip-hop. Being a soldier doesn't necessarily mean you will ever make it to *The Source* or BET. It is all about 2 Tim 2:3. The skills of Raiderz' Messenger are showcased on this song, but as with Cross Movement, it is all done with complete edification. This is the stuff. There are a few crews who fully inject Christ into hip-hop, and Raiderz is one of them.

"Code of Honor" is one of the hottest tracks—straight blazing. So many things are relative today. We need to recognize Christ and his code of honor.

Matthew Abraham and the Raiderz of the Lost have been working on this project for about two years. Though they've faced trials of many kinds, God has blessed and, as Messenger says, it was all God's timing. God is using Christian rap to do a "new thing" more radical than Toby could have imagined back in the 9-0. Just look at what's going on with Gotee Records and Grits. I believe He is gonna do the same with Raiderz.

-Stu Metzler



evi e w s

THE JULIANA THEORY
TOOth & Nail

They say they have a theory to prove. Exactly what that theory entails remains somewhat unclear. All that is explained on The Juliana Theory's *Understand This Is A Dream* is that the group is helping a study of actions and reactions between people through music.

Drawn from the anguish of a twentysomething who's learning to deal with the pressures involved with love and growing up, The Juliana Theory tell a riveting story. Packed full of distinct rhythmic guitars and strong, emotionally intense vocals, this four-member group shows how even "sociology experiments" can fulfill the requirements to be a powerful emo band.

Though influences as broad as the Beatles and Dr. Dre can be found on the album, the group's overall sound is closest to the likes of Dear Ephesus and Sunny Day Real Estate. However, vocalist Brett Detar comes across with a much smoother tone than most emosingers.

While the softer, more dynamic songs such as "August in Bethany," "Music Box Superhero" and "For Evangeline" are some of the best on *Understand This Is A Dream*, emo's punk roots can still be heard in the group's heavier moments. Whether or not they actually help explain some great sociological theory, one thing this album proves is they know how to convincingly pour their hearts into what they do.

-Melody Alexander

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I've always been fascinated by what I call "cumulative narrative," when a storyteller weaves smaller, individual stories into a larger picture. The story may be meaningful in itself, but the accumulated weight gives the story greater significance.

I was reminded of that power when I recently saw an episode of the Superman animated series, "Father's Day," which still gives me chills every time I see it. When Clark's parents come to Metropolis for a visit, his father Jonathan becomes pinned under rubble and trapped in a collapsing building. But Clark—in his costumed alter ego as Superman—cannot come to the rescue; he's busy fighting for his life against the brutish Kalibak, who wishes to earn the love of his own father, the nefarious Darkseid. It's a heartbreaking parallel that connects the two titans, as both fight for their fathers.

"Father's Day" is an emotional half hour all by itself, but it is also part of a larger story: At the end of this episode, when Superman meets Darkseid for the first time, it's a meeting that's been a long time coming. And it's just a precursor to Darkseid's eventual return from his home planet with troops to conquer Earth.

Many series (in any media) just sort of go from one thing to the next; it makes no difference whether you witness the individual pieces in order or not. But when the storytellers draw on cumulative narrative, it's a powerful thing. You can find examples all over, from the television show China Beach to C.S. Lewis' The Chronicles of Namia and Shakespeare's historical plays to Star Wars and Star Trek.

You can also find "cumulative narrative" running through the Bible. It's astounding how cohesive those 66 separate books really are, especially when you consider they were written over the course of centuries. But we often fall into the trap of studying this book or that chapter without really thinking through the larger context of the passage.

In fact, many limit their studies to the New Testament (after all, "newer" is always "better," right?), without seeing that the Old Testament isn't just a "prequel"—it's all part of the same, continuous story. As Jesus said, "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill" (Matt. 5:17).

When it comes to Christian art, we sometimes make the same mistake. We think every painting needs to be a scene from the crucifixion, every three-minute pop song needs to be based on John 3:16 and every novel

building



Over and above particular prophecies, the New Testament sees in Jesus Christ the climax and comprehensive fulfillment of the entire Old Testament. It is not simply in a few scattered texts that the ancient witness to Christ is to be discovered; the Old Testament in its entirety testifies to the truth ... '

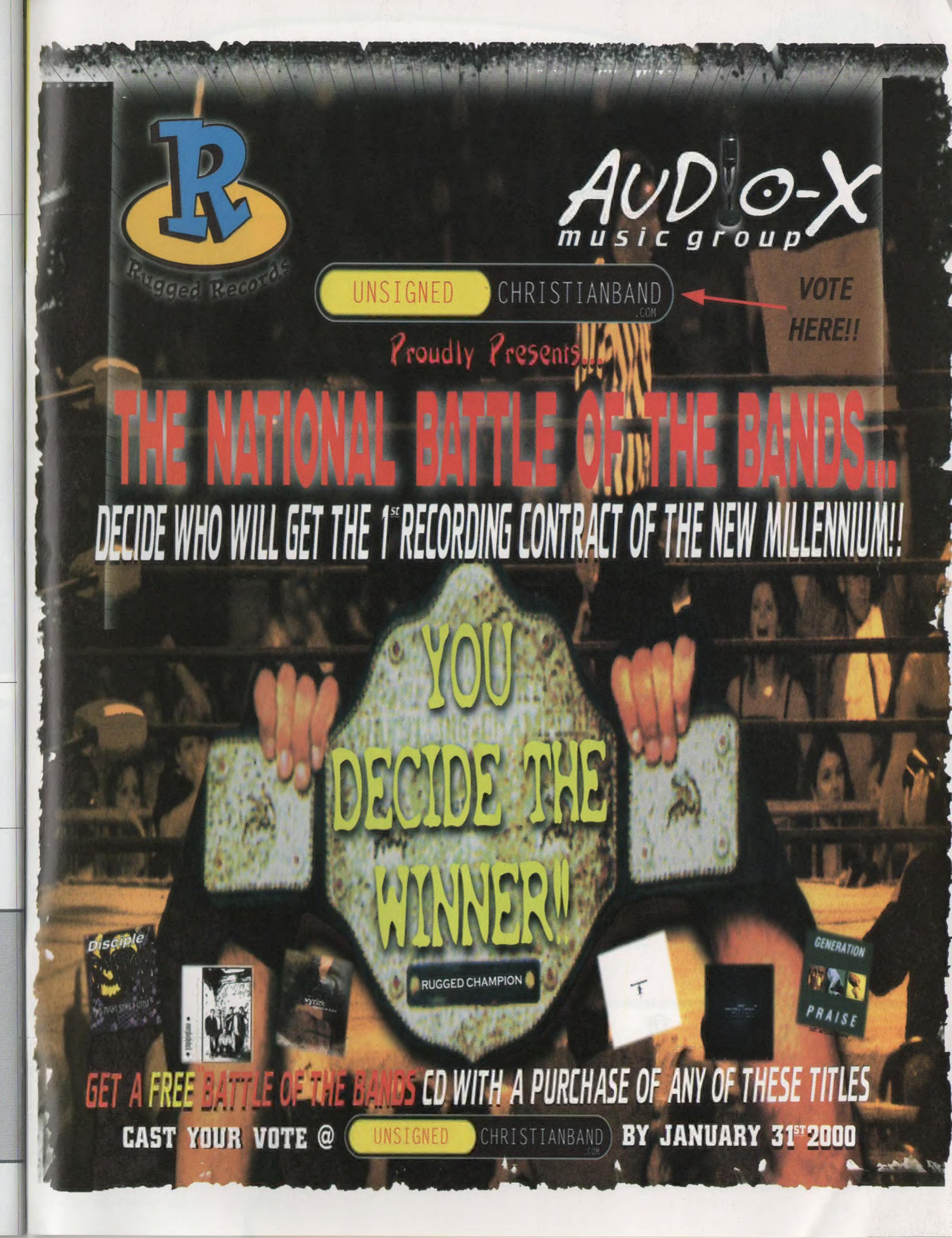
-Carl Henry

(God, Revelation and Authority, Vol. III, pg. 135)

needs to include a sinner's prayer. Yet, God-the Creator-saw fit to make the Bible a full, whole narrative, complete with beginning, middle and end. (John Stott called it "the divine autobiography.")

Yes, each individual piece of the Bible carries its own power and teaches specific things. But it's also part of a single, continuous revelation as God reaches out to Man. As powerful as John 3:16 can be to the uninitiated, it carries way more weight when you read the 42 books and two chapters that precede it.

In later episodes, when Darkseid finally returned with a full armada to invade Earth, it was a big deal, even to someone who just tuned in. But there was a poignancy that could only be appreciated by longtime viewers. They knew the price paid to get to that point—and were haunted by memories of a hulking, lumbering little boy who only wanted his father's love. 7





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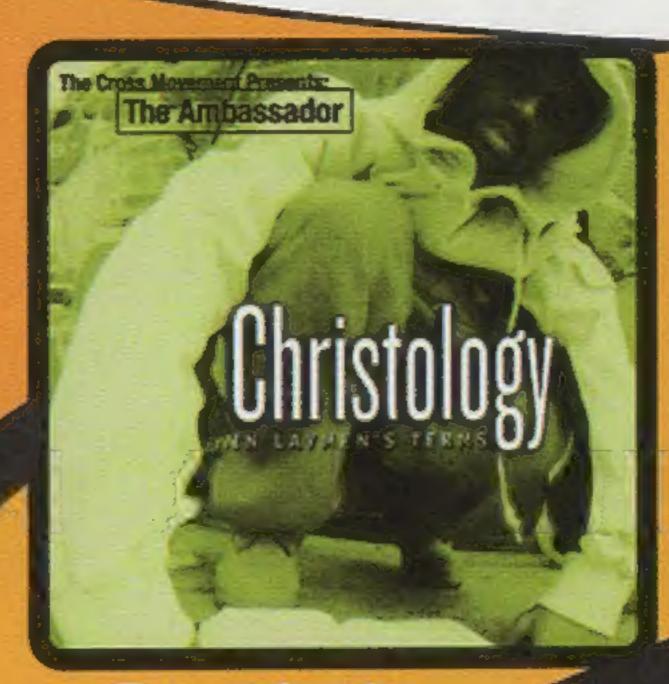
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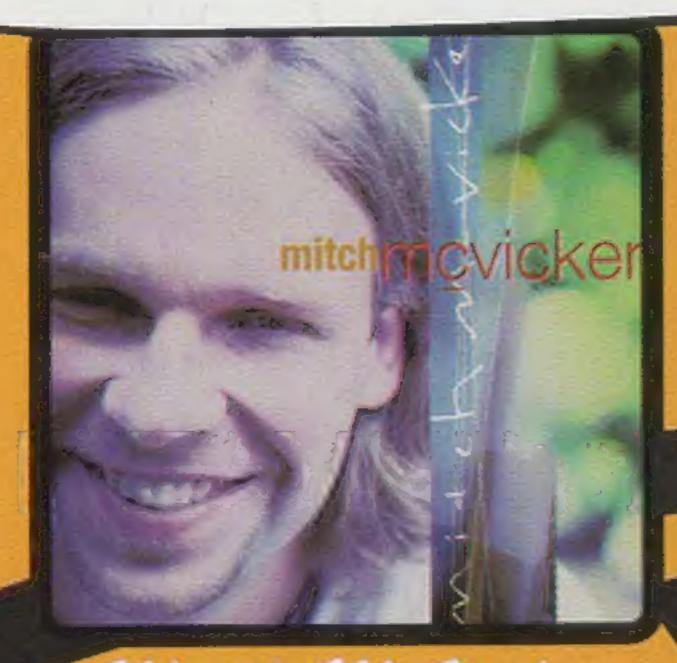


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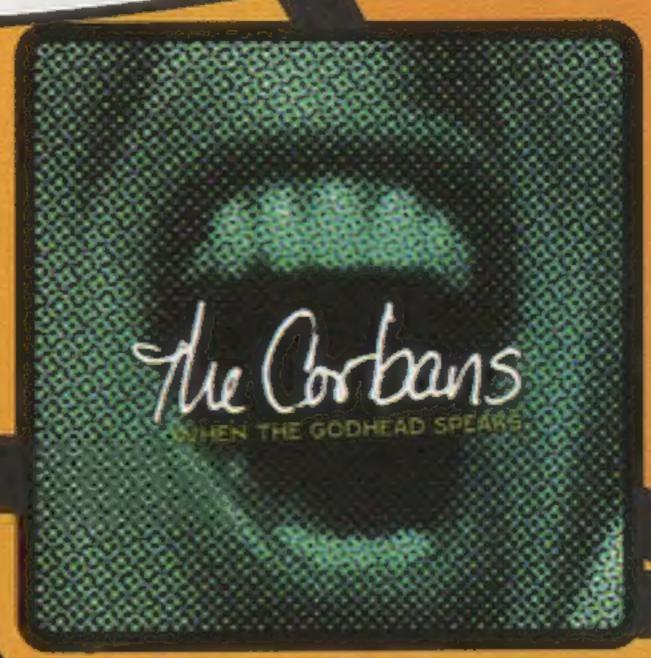


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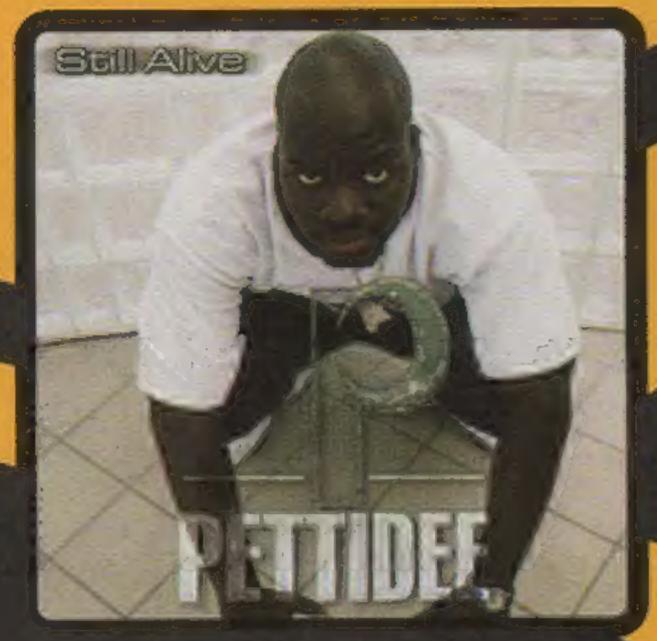


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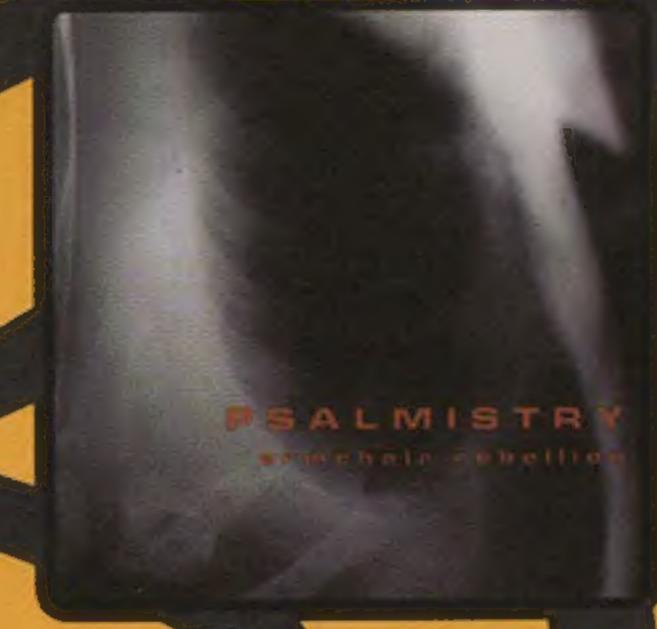
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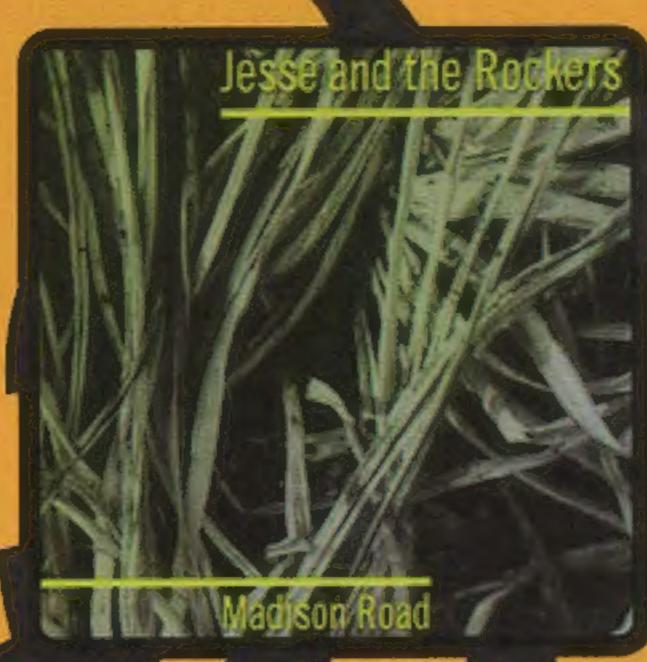
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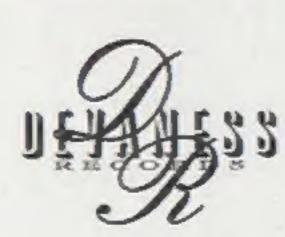


















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